

# CONTENTS.

JULY—SEPTEMBER, 1952.

## POETRY:—

	PAGE
A VISION OF GLENDALOUGH. By JOSEPH CAMPBELL ... ..	I
MARIS STELLA. By PADRAIC FALLON ... ..	II
RAIN IN THE PINE-WOODS. TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO. By LORNA REYNOLDS AND GIOIA GAIDONI ...	13
THE FAIRY IN THE STREAKED TULIP OF SUIBHNE GEILT, CENNFAELADH O NEILL, AND WILLIAM BLAKE. By ELIZABETH O'HIGGINS ... ..	17
MANGAN IN AMERICA, 1850-1860. MITCHEL, MARY-LAND AND MELVILLE. By FRANCIS J. THOMPSON	30
DRAMATIC COMMENTARY. By A. J. LEVENTHAL ...	42
ART NOTES. By EDWARD SHEEHY ... ..	45
BOOK REVIEWS ... ..	48

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# THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE

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## A VISION OF GLENDALOUGH

By Joseph Campbell

*[After the publication of The Earth of Cualann in 1917, Joseph Campbell planned a long poem about Glendalough. In its method it was to resemble the old Gaelic topographical poems and its outer form would be simple and firm as ashlar-work. No more was heard of the project, but the completed poem was found among the poet's papers after his death. The poem has not yet been published, but we are able, by permission of the author's literary executor, to print part of it. For convenience, Coemhghen may be read as Kevin.]*

Pale in the moon the Round Tower dreams,  
The leaning High Cross shares its light,  
While all about lie shadowed graves.

This is the place of death, and yet  
Life surges from its loneliness.  
Listen!—the pad of hidden feet.  
Saint Coemhghen walks abroad tonight,  
And breathes the air my body breathes.  
Gaunt as his staff, he slowly moves  
Toward the Upper Loch, and there, his arms  
Spread like the letter Tau,  
Immerst in icy water, stands  
Illuminate with ecstasy.  
Out of the dark a blackbird flies,  
And in his right dexter palm  
Builds her small nest. Laying her eggs,  
She hatches them through laggard hours,  
And feeds her brood, till in the leaves  
Of Righfeart oaks they flit and sing.  
By the fey sense that is my gift,  
I see the sacred Scriptures set  
On seven mouldering altar stones ;

And with smooth, orient-pointed brows,  
 Between wax candles dimly limned,  
 Seven tonsured Culdees saying Mass.  
 Faint as sheepbleat or wash of wave,  
 Their voices fall ; and up the glen  
 I hear the solemn, answering chant  
 Of Sons of Reading—ghosts too thin  
 For sight, or, seen across the heath,  
 Half-imaged phantoms, cowl and mist.  
 Night's wizardry of moon and dark  
 Weaves a strange pattern. From the Rath,  
 Elder than Coemhghen and his cills,  
 Wavers a cry, half chant, half keen ;  
 And on the etched rampart dance  
 Tall figures, black as Dosan's turf.  
 Druids they seem, or kings helm-crowned ;  
 For, drest in hieratic coats,  
 Now lost, now found in clouded light,  
 They sway and swing ; and from gold grails  
 And maces glitters fire, and wisps  
 Of incense tremble to the sky.

What liturgy intone these khans ?  
 What rite perform ? No secret sign  
 Is given me.

Then upon my ear  
 Suddenly crashes a dread roar  
 Of rending rocks, and on my eye  
 Looms imminent a wall of earth  
 Slow-sliding from dark Tethra's cave.  
 All is eclipse and syncope ;  
 But soon it clears, and motherwit  
 Paints on the film that is my brain  
 Huge icebergs, free of primal cold,  
 Thrusting before them with vast strength  
 The stuff that filled this ancient glen  
 Ere Time began. Shrouded in smoke,  
 Steep granite cliffs are sheared like cheese ;



And as the dinosaurian plough  
 Drives on its seaward-plunging course  
 Erratics lone are lifted high,  
 And perish on level shelves. Forlorn,  
 In coupled pits under their cirques,  
 Piast-harboured lochs are formed, and cower  
 Out of the gaze of the white sky  
 And the all-mastering, friendly sun.  
 From these dark lochs, in turn, outflow  
 Waters that cleanse with amber floods  
 Boulders, fieldstones and scattered spawls,  
 Elkhorns and skeletons of deer,  
 Piling them in a dry moraine.

On such foundation (as it were  
 Fixt by God's thought) Saint Coemhghen built  
 The Episcopal City; girt with woods,  
 By cataracts lulled, and fanned by breaths  
 From heath and furze.

I see it plain  
 Under the moon (a wafer pure  
 Of lovely light); not with the eye  
 Of vision, but the corneal eye  
 Which sharply scans the shape of things  
 And looks no deeper. Coemhghen's Church  
 I see under its wall of rock,  
 Teampull na Sceilig called by bards;  
 And Coemhghen's Bed, in which the saint  
 Slept through his life, and Adam's sin  
 Purged from his penitential bones.  
 The Rath I see, pagan and dark;  
 Skirting it, Righfeart, where the chiefs  
 Of Cuala, the high Ui Tuathail,  
 Hold everlasting hosting; and,  
 West of the Lower Loch, the Church  
 Of Mary. Sentinel on guard  
 Over the ancient graveyard, stands  
 The Round Tower, russet-white in the moon,

The City's living heart. Close by,  
 I see the gables of the Cathaoir Mor—  
 Cathedral chair of Lorcan Mor—  
 Crowning the drumlin-like upswell  
 Where Dosan's river joins the stream,  
 Son of the Two Lochs. Next, I see  
 The Priest's House ; and, priapus-topt,  
 Saint Coemhghen's Kitchen, and the bridge  
 Linking the City with the road  
 Once trodden by pilgrims, but now green  
 For lack of feet. Saint Ciaran's Church  
 I see ; and then the Keeper's Gate,  
 With voussoired arches, and the Cross  
 Where criminals in Gaelic times,  
 Just touching, found safe sanctuary.  
 Free of the City proper, but  
 Still in the moon's sphere, brood the walls  
 Of Trinity Church, its bellhouse struck  
 By storm, and now in ruin dire ;  
 And last (far down the glen) I see  
 Saint Saviour's Priory, romanesque,  
 With mullioned windows deftly carved,  
 And double aumbry. There, in fields  
 Monastic, graze a farmer's cows,  
 Wraithlike on such a night ; and trout  
 Leap from swift water, and the air  
 Savours of heaven, and seraphs' harps  
 Hum softly—and the August moon  
 Tempers its rays twixt light and dark,  
 Till the Saint's City melts, and dream  
 Absorbs and makes it one with dream.

Cannot it be that mountain dark,  
 Pale-lanterned moon, dim waterfall,  
 Work of God's ardour, too, are dream ?

Eas Ban, Eas Dubh, their sound is dream.

How often did the eremite,  
 Coemhghen, withdrawn from carnal things,

Safe in his gloomy Desert, turn  
 To their weird radiance, and, still,  
 Harking with holy, inner ear,  
 Know in their voice God's very voice !  
 How often must he, thus intent,  
 Have taken new courage for the war  
 With Satan, his fierce adversary !—  
 Satan, whose hand is strong, but not  
 Subtle enough to weave the spell  
 Of water tumbling over rock.

Water and moon are symbols ; weak  
 Like woman ; their fluidity  
 Steadfast to wear adamant  
 To a moth's wing, and so endure.

Six times, when Cionaoth reigned, and Flann,  
 And Niall Glún Dubh, the cills were robbed  
 In Viking raids ; the pirate Norse  
 Marching from haven in Wykinlo,  
 Where caravels of benched oars  
 Waited their booty's swift return,  
 To bear it oversea. Seven times  
 From Brian's death to Ruaidhri Maol  
 The purple glen reflected fire,  
 And burning thatches flared, and priests  
 Fled innocent before brute oaths.  
 In Norman days Earl Strigul's men,  
 Fighting in hard chain mail, broke through  
 The arrowed barrage from the Tower,  
 Carrying off gold chalices,  
 Silk copes and blazoned vellum rolls.  
 Again, one winter dawn, a weir,  
 Grown mutinous, swamped the City's mill,  
 And stopped the oaken waterwheel  
 Where corn since Coemhghen's burial  
 Was ground for neighbour poorfolk. Last,  
 In Thirteen Ninety-Eight, prime June,  
 Because of umbrage by the clans  
 Ui Broin, Ui Tuathail, stern overlords



Of Raghmallach and Cuala,  
 Against a Saxon in the seat  
 Of Coemhghen's native abbacy,  
 The Gall-Phocs sacked the place. Till now  
 It has lain ruinous.

And yet  
 Down the dark ages when the Code  
 Of Teamair lapsed, and alien power  
 Grew strong, and Luther's gloomy horn  
 Challenged the Adzehead's, the bright dream  
 Lived on.

Not greed, nor jealousy,  
 Not fire which scuffed lintel and jamb,  
 Nor growth of nettles when the torch  
 Fell quencht, and desolation's peace  
 Lay on mossed stones that erstwhile knew  
 Only Christ's peace, could stay for long  
 The loyal heart of faith. In course,  
 The Turas grew—a sweet sacrament,  
 Fair outward sign of inward grace ;  
 And the forsaken Pilgrims' Road,  
 The Causeway Coemhghen walked, and paths  
 Beaten through briars by bleeding feet  
 Became black highways. Led by the cone  
 Of Coemhghen's Tower, proud travellers came—  
 Kings, they aver, and lesser squires—  
 Their ladies with them, suffering ill  
 For penances' sake. And ollamhs, too,  
 Outlanders some, some gavel-born,  
 But by the duress of Poyning's Law  
 Forct into exile—who, as chance  
 Would offer, snatched a salt-wet bed  
 Aboard some ship for Eire bound,  
 And, safely landed, made the rounds,  
 Thanking God's providence for life.  
 Bards, too, betorqued, in earnest quest  
 Of the lost, legendary Book  
 (Parchment of lineage rare) which kept  
 The acts, through dead, grey decades gone,



Of Coemhghen and his sons. But, most,  
 Trooped in the country folk : poor kerns,  
 Wild in shag rugs (so Derrick's pen  
 Drew them), with glibbs of matted hair ;  
 Their wives wilder than they, in cloaks  
 Which swathed their milkfull, ample breasts,  
 And swaddled babes—the carriers  
 Of lusty septs unborn. What faith  
 More true than theirs, as, on bare knees,  
 They said the " Credo " ?

### Memory

Is dream : a flickering cerograph  
 Shadowed, now faint, now sharp as gall,  
 On the contemporary soul.

I see red Cromwell's penal age,  
 When pitchcap, stretching-rack and rope  
 Were the law's sole arbitrament.  
 Then did proscription rule as king ;  
 And lords of substance were suborned  
 By lynx-eyed Scots discoverers,  
 Or hanged (like Piaras Feiriteir)  
 In their grim market-towns. On bens,  
 In caves, in farmyard ricks some found  
 Brief succour ; till, by slow degrees,  
 The chivalry begot of swords  
 Bugged down in cudgels. Hence the phrase,  
 "*Eire fá cheilt* " ; and to this day  
 The real Eire is a jewel,  
 Unsunned and hidden.

### Mountain folk,

The elect of Fate, thuswise became  
 Repositories of fine gold—  
 Tradition's homing : poor slieveens,  
 Tillers of rundale, fishers, herds,  
 Who, though (sad wretches) scant in much,  
 In much were full.

And by yon moon,  
 Friend of the visionary eye,  
 I see their eighteenth century, frieze  
 And heavy drugget, madder brown,  
 Colouring the roads from Brocach side  
 To high Rath Droma. Coemhghen's Day !  
 And the first summer sky is white  
 With cloud, barred like a mackerel skin,  
 And happy larks climb heaven for joy.  
 Round old Market Cross the throng  
 Gathers to pray :—tanned women, spruce  
 In foreign shawls, tall men, with cocks  
 Stuck in their hats. Low-droned ranns  
 Mingle with vivid nearby talk ;  
 And, loud afield, is heard the noise  
 Of tinsmiths quarrelling . . . pedlar sharps  
 Selling their shoddy wares . . . blind men  
 With fiddles, or, with empty eyes,  
 Begging for pence . . . barefooted boys  
 And girls, fresh-ribboned, dancing reels  
 To bagpipes . . . acrobats, half fools . . .  
 Mummers, mongers of balladsheets . . .  
 Trick-o'-the-loopmen, maggie men . . .  
 Bacachs with bolstered crutches . . . whores  
 And trollops bold, crying the males,  
 For Coemhghen's sake, to taste their charms,  
 And buy them bread ! The sun-warmed air  
 Drowzes on wildflowers, and I drink  
 Whole draughts ; imbibing, too, the smell  
 Of tripe, pigs' knuckles and *dreisin*,  
*Duilleasg*, porter, tobacco leaf,  
 And the stale-tanged animal smell  
 Of dogs and asses.

Loving form,  
 A painter, loose among such folk,  
 Would fully find it ; loving speech, -  
 A writer, listening, would say, " Rare ! "  
 Loving custom, an ethnologist

Would ask : " Who of this motley crowd  
 Is gentle and who simple ? Who,  
 A tuata ? Who, with tanist's blood  
 In his veins ? Which, blond Milesian ?  
 Which, swarthy Firbolg ? "—For so change  
 Had wrought upon the Gaelic state,  
 That all was chaos : louts in power,  
 Chiefs sunk to peasants. And the three,  
 Each in his separate way, would note  
 The roots of art in savagery.

Spills not ripe sun its gold, nor moon  
 Its silver on what now I see.  
 A bleak December day : sleet falls.  
 Shabbily, toward the Keeper's Gate  
 A funeral passes. The poor corpse  
 Is shoulder-borne. Some score of men  
 Follow it ; and, behind, five crones,  
 Their flannel petticoats upcaught  
 To shelter neck and head. No priest  
 Accompanies them, for Georgius Rex  
 Is tyrant of this Catholic land.  
 Halting without the Gate, they turn  
 South, and in clockwise sequence bear  
 Their burden round the Graveyard wall  
 Three times—the reason why, none knows,  
 Except that since Saint Coemhghen's death  
 The practice is at burings.  
 Then at the open Gate they stop.  
 The men uncover, and the crones,  
 Heads veiled and bowed, begin to keen ;  
 And to that wailing Pictish dirge  
 The cortège enters. Silently,  
 They guide their footsteps over graves,  
 Mounded through centuries. The keen  
 Billows and sinks, and with each wave  
 The black crones nod and lift their heads :  
 A concert, played against the carns  
 Of cobalt-circled cliffs (weird sound,

Off colour intermixt) most strange.  
 Briefly they halt at the High Cross ;  
 And, westering down the slope, at last  
 Stand at the stark, appointed place—  
 Breath's end, termon of everyman.  
 Idle, fists clamped on shovel shafts,  
 Locks wild to the thick-scudding sleet,  
 Two diggers wait. Uncouth, bemused,  
 The bearers set their burden down ;  
 The keen ceases ; and from the group  
 A veteran hedge schoolmaster,  
 In patcht surtout and beaver hat,  
 Emerges, and with artless words  
 Praises the dead :—" A journeyman,"  
 (So their gist runs) " who wove his web  
 Close as skill knew, and to the Fair  
 Has brought it." Weak-breathy, he withdraws.  
 New rope, in hands accustomed, lowers  
 The dead to his dark house ; the clay  
 Is hollowly dropt ; the scraws replaced ;  
 And to the music of the crones,  
 Redoubled, with dry handclapping,  
 The mourners spread, and face for home.  
 —What lamplit tavern will drown  
 Their sorrow ? What rough, bawdy songs ?  
 For tears come to a laughing end,  
 And fun must finish funerals.  
 The wind wails, the snow scuds. Black night  
 Swallows dim, winter-bitten cliffs,  
 And the new dead sleeps sound among  
 His fellows of a thousand years.

Winter and gloom ? No so ! Death broods,  
 Sole master now ; but life will soon  
 Assert its right in rivalry.  
 Green April's call beckons the wrens,  
 And ivied quoin and budding bush  
 Echo their busy notes. The stream,  
 Is freshet from the lochs, runs clear,



And ewes with lamb drink unafraid ;  
 Mists cross the carns, soft as a fleece,  
 Responsive to the airs that move  
 Up the recesses of the glen ;  
 And the pure ether, rainbow-ringed,  
 Compasses, comforts everything.

## MARIS STELLA

*By Padraic Fallon*

In the flat gaze of the quays,  
 On wet stone where evening lies, the fishermen  
 Overhaul their gear.

And the light receives  
 Blue overalls and black rubber boots  
 And drowns them sometimes in a wintry flash  
 From which they recover, fastened by the usual thoughts  
 To the bobbing floats of their familiar heads,  
 And find again their own appearances.

Around them always is the sea :  
 And inside them with no murmur over the ground  
 The sea ; and below, how do I know  
 How many fathoms down  
 Their trailing limbs go ?  
 Into what fishtailed memory ?

Seas in their heads, too ; do they turn  
 Over in their beds with every ebb and flood ?  
 Their sleep wide-open weather  
 Where fish swim and birds cry  
 Over and around them and inside them forever ?

So not as men only but living up and down  
 Their obscure spirals of air and water they  
 Add their little rhythms to the sea.  
 Each man an estuary.

Yes, almost unhumanly,  
 Almost finned and winged as fish and fowl,  
 Almost as certain as they  
 In their own elusive counterpoint they move out,  
 Not to collide with but to ride  
 All rhythms and forces  
 As centaurs, horses themselves, ride horses.

But so incessantly  
 Do they need to retrieve themselves from drowning  
 In boats, in thoughts, in seas outside and in, however,  
 They become aware, they know terror  
 As the other pulse, the greater.

And they dare not eavesdrop on themselves, they dare  
 Not look within where all the underworld  
 Is turning into myth  
 In lust and dream, in drama and in terror,  
 All that they are  
 To utter you who are unutterable :  
 You, caught up like a breath,  
 The very last before death.

## II

Men with meanings  
 Inside that wait like cold wicks in oil,  
 Here they endure the wide stare of things  
 Roosting like seabirds, here they pull  
 Themselves out of the waters to keep station  
 On you like some continuous intimation :  
 Do you know them from other birds who fold their wings  
 Above your coasts and rain down droppings ?

Are you always arriving ashore  
 And through them up some old waterstairs of feeling ?  
 Are you the Igniter who climbs up the tower  
 Of their gaze to light that archaic reeling  
 Lanthorn in each face ?

Are you that cold thing in the gaze?  
 That barbarous look of the older climate,  
 The half-made men, the not-yet-private?

The fisheaters, the fishcatchers  
 Who rise arrayed in and shedding fishes like  
 Electric shocks, who disappear for days into the weathers  
 Of the giant's house, but to ride  
 Out when all is lost to dodge upon  
 An immense and dangerous horizon  
 And only when we've lost all hope  
 Come home on a fair wind up the telescope?

O nobody knows what you do  
 Inside. Do you prepare a vision  
 Of shocks and perils so that they bring to you  
 A tumult that will die, siren,  
 Into your quiet face  
 Where your sea-tailed feet draw up with infinite grace  
 All oceans in one still blue wave  
 Around you, there above the grave?

But here you are savage and salt and blindly you stare  
 Through eyes that are seabirds' eyes, so cold  
 Men must have an ancient stature  
 In watery things to hold  
 Converse with you, Mother, O wild element,  
 And find words like gull or gannet  
 That are cries and dives and hungry wings,  
 Poems ugly as a rain of droppings.

## RAIN IN THE PINE-WOOD

*From the Italian of Gabriele D'Annunzio,  
 translated by Lorna Reynolds and Gioia Gaidoni.*

Hush! On the threshold  
 Of the wood I do not hear  
 Human words, but I hear  
 Other words which speak the drops and leaves  
 A-far-off.

Listen ! It rains  
 From scattered clouds.  
 It rains on the salt and thirsty tamarisks.  
 It rains on the pines  
 Scaly and bristling.  
 It rains on the sacred myrtles.  
 It rains on the broom, shining  
 In its clustered flowers,  
 On the juniper thick  
 With odoriferous berries.  
 It rains on our sylvan  
 Faces ;  
 It rains on our bare  
 Hands,  
 On our light garments,  
 On the fresh thoughts  
 Which the soul opens anew,  
 On the lovely fable  
 Which yesterday you  
 And to-day me deceives,  
 O Ermione.

Do you hear ? The rain falls  
 On the lonely verdure  
 With a persistent pattering  
 Varying in the air  
 As the leaves are sparse  
 As the leaves are dense.  
 Listen. To the plaint  
 In song reply the cicadas,  
 Frightened neither by the crying of the South Wind,  
 Nor the ashen sky.  
 And the pine  
 Has one sound, and the myrtle  
 Another sound, and the juniper  
 Yet another, instruments  
 Differing beneath innumerable fingers.  
 And we are immersed  
 In the spirit of the wood,



Living the life of the trees,  
 And your drunken face  
 Is soft with rain,  
 Like a leaf,  
 And your hair  
 Is scented like the bright broom,  
 O creature of the earth,  
 Whose name is  
 Ermione.

Listen, listen ! The harmony  
 Of the aery cicadas grows  
 Little by little,  
 Muted beneath the swelling plaint,  
 But there mingles with it now  
 A harsher song,  
 Which rises from below,  
 From the far humid shadows.  
 Muted, feebler  
 It fades and dies.  
 A single note  
 Still lingers, dies away,  
 Rises, lingers, dies again.  
 No voice is heard from the silent sea.  
 But there is heard over all the foliage  
 The showering  
 Of the silvery rain  
 Which cleanses,  
 The shower which varies  
 As the foliage is dense  
 Or less dense.  
 The daughter of the air  
 Is silenced : but the daughter  
 Of the far-off mud,  
 The frog,  
 Sings in the deeper shadows,  
 Who knows where, who knows where !  
 And it rains on your eye-lashes,  
 O Ermione.

It rains on your dark eye-lashes,  
 So that you seem to cry,  
 But for pleasure : Not white,  
 But as if made green,  
 Unhusked from the bark, you emerge,  
 And all the life in us  
 Is freshly fragrant,  
 The heart in our breast  
 Is like an unfingered peach,  
 Beneath your eyelids the eyes  
 Gleam like rain pools in the grass,  
 And your teeth in their sockets  
 Are like peeled almonds,  
 And we go from thicket to thicket,  
 United or apart,  
 (And the rude green growth  
 Grips our ankles  
 Twines itself about our knees)  
 Who knows where, who knows where !  
 And it rains on our sylvan  
 Faces ;  
 It rains on our bare  
 Hands,  
 On our light garments,  
 On the fresh thoughts  
 Which the mind opens anew,  
 On the lovely fable  
 Which yesterday me  
 And to-day you deceives,  
 O Ermione.

# THE FAIRY IN THE STREAKED TULIP OF SUIBHNE GEILT, CENNFAELADH O NEILL, AND WILLIAM BLAKE

By Elizabeth O'Higgins

"—to cast aside from Poetry all that is not Inspiration  
That it no longer shall dare to mock with the aspersion of Madness  
Cast on the Inspired."

RECOGNITION of Blake's Irish origin has led to a new understanding of some problems in old Irish literature. This result was to be expected. For Blake was only two generations removed from his kindred who fought against William of Orange. The night that followed Limerick clouded the past as well as the future. David O'Bruadair, an Irish poet who died in 1697 or 1698, lamented that the books of Irish poets lay mouldering and neglected in corners, and that the very sons of the poets no longer knew anything of the treasures of secret wisdom locked up in the writings of their fathers. But the great race of Eoghan endured, guarding its hidden light, and out of the chaos of the dispossessed shot forth a dancing star.

Blake knew that the spirits invoked by Irish Druids were the spirits of trees represented in the Beth-luis-nion alphabet. There exists a mediaeval tale, entitled *Buile Suibhne Geilt*, in which the story is interrupted, with apparent irrelevance, by a poem, the longest in the work, in praise of the trees of Ireland. Thanks to Blake, we are now in a position to understand the relevance of this poem to the general theme of the tale.

The importance of Blake's knowledge may be emphasised very briefly. *Buile Suibhne Geilt* is commonly understood to mean *The Madness of Mad Suibhne*. Suibhne Geilt does not mean *Mad Suibhne*: it means *Suibhne, the Druid*. Geilt was a spirit. Dinneen gives the examples *muir-gheilt*, sea-spirit, and *aer-gheilt*, air-spirit. When Amergin called himself, for instance, a "stag of seven tines," he was claiming to be the birch-spirit, he was claiming to be, like Suibhne, *geilt*. St. Columba understood this meaning of geilt when he declared: "My Druid is Christ."

Nor is it correct to translate *Buile*, in relation to Suibhne, as *madness*. Late narrators of Suibhne's story did believe that *buile* meant mere madness. But to Suibhne's contemporaries, *buile*, in reference to a poet, meant the inspired state, which was never in pre-scientific thought, clearly distinguished from madness: both were attributed to possession by a spirit.

In this light, *Buile Suibhne Geilt* takes on a new, and unique, importance. When scholars will have disentangled from the mediaeval tale the poems of Suibhne himself, we shall hear the authentic voice of a Druid of the 7th century. And this Druid of the Irish Picts will have no mean place in our records, for he was, it is already clear, a true poet of deep human feeling and subtle intellect. Moreover, if the fairy who dictated to Blake his poem *Europe* is to be identified as the inspiring spirit of any particular Irish poet, that poet is Suibhne Geilt.

*Buile Suibhne Geilt* was edited and translated by J. G. O'Keeffe, and published for the first time in 1913. In 1917, appeared under the editorship of George Calder, a work of the first importance to our understanding of Suibhne, an *Irish Scholars' Primer*, partly composed, partly collated from earlier sources, by Cennfaeladh the Learned, in the 7th century. The primer continued to be worked over by later scholars, and Calder assigns the language of the particular text he edited to a date somewhere between the 7th and the 11th century.

The section of the *Scholars' Primer*, which is called *Cennfaeladh's Book*, begins:—

“As regards place, time, person and cause of writing that book of Cennfaeladh: its place Derry Luran, its time the time of Domhnall, son of Aed, son of Ainmire. Its person Cennfaeladh, son of Oilill; cause of writing it, that his brain of forgetfulness was dashed out of Cennfaeladh's head in the battle of Moyrath. Four victories of that battle; rout of Conghal in his lie before Domhnall in his truth; and Suibhne becoming *geilt*, but it is owing to the number of poems he made; the Scotsman bearing the Irishman with him over the sea, Dubh Diad was his name; and his brain of forgetfulness being dashed out of Cennfaeladh's head, owing to the extent of poetry, words and reading that he amassed.”



The battle, the issue of which appears to have turned Cennfaeladh into a scholar, and Suibhne into a poet,—these memorable Ulstermen were both on the losing side—, was fought in 637 at Moyrath, later called Moira, in Co. Down. Domhnall was king of Tyrconnell and High King of Ireland. Conghal Claen was king of the Ulidians, the ancient Ulster race with which the Red Branch tales are associated. Suibhne, king of the Picts who held Dal Araidhe, supported Conghal. And on their side, against the High King, marched Cennfaeladh's people, the Siol Eoghain, later to be known as the O'Neills of Ulster. On the day King Domhnall won the battle of Moyrath, the Siol Eoghain were defeated by an ally of Domhnall's.

The battle of Moyrath decided the struggle for power between Druids and Christian preachers. James Bonwick, in a work entitled *Irish Druids and Old Irish Religions*, published in 1894, wrote: "The Synod of Drumceat, in 590, laid restrictions on Druids, but the Druids were officially abolished after the decisive Battle of Moyrath, 637." It is evident that the ideological struggle was as its most active in the 6th and 7th centuries. St. Columba was the dominating personality of the Convention of Drumceat. It was the 7th century saints, Fursey and Adamnan, who laid the foundations of Irish belief in the Christian afterlife. We catch a glimpse of the dialectic of the 7th century in the altered meaning of *Buile*. While Suibhne's visions came to be considered madness, the visions St. Adamnan saw of heaven and hell were called *fios*, i.e., knowledge.

Late misinterpretation of the word *geilt* begot a curious by-product. The Irish poet's cloak was made of birds' feathers, and Irish Druids, for various reasons, sometimes referred to themselves as birds. Until very recently, the belief survived in at least one corner of Eire that madmen grow feathers on their bodies. Blake illustrated the belief in his picture of Nebuchadnezzar.

The suppression of one way of life and feeling by another could not have taken place among a people so conscious, so proudly conscious of their past, as were the ancient Irish, without profound emotional resistance, both conscious and unconscious.

There did not exist among them that widespread psychological distress which, in the first centuries of the Christian era, overwhelmed the rootless masses of the Mediterranean world, and sent them, craving for the lost sense of belonging to a human community, to seek initiation in one or other of the cults which maintained, with a new meaning, a semblance of old tribal initiations. Whatever else the Irish clansman lacked, he did not lack the comfort of having an assured place in the community into which he was born. The Battle of Moyrath was not, in fact, decisive, Cennfaeladh believed. Domhnall won a battle, and Conghal Claen was slain. But there were three other victorious issues of the battle. One, that Suibhne escaped to Scotland, with the help of Dubh Diad, the Druid who foretold the death of Conghal: another, that Suibhne became a poet. And the fourth victory was won by Cennfaeladh himself.

Cennfaeladh's statement that his brain of forgetfulness was dashed from his head at Moyrath, is curious. Joyce supposed that, when he recovered from the head injury he received in the battle, he was found to have new power of memory. The statement is open to a somewhat different interpretation. The defeat of the northern chiefs by King Domhnall might well have awakened in the young clansman a sorrowing awareness that the millennial culture of his race was now doomed to decay. Certainly, Cennfaeladh's work indicates a devotion to native tradition not less ardent than that of the more poetic Suibhne. He lived till 679, more than forty years after the battle of Moyrath, and he seems to have devoted his gifts mainly to the preservation of Irish learning. It is significant that the work by which Cennfaeladh is best known is the *Scholars' Primer*, which contains the earliest surviving study of Ogham, through the symbols of which Suibhne was, about the time Cennfaeladh was engaged on the Primer, expressing his dislike of the victorious Church.

Two fateful dates in our history, the battle of Moyrath in 637, the Treaty of Limerick in 1691, each marking the end of an epoch, each threatening to submerge the ancient traditions of Eire. As, after the battle of Moyrath, Cennfaeladh of the O'Neills of Tyrone, set himself to preserve the ancient traditions, so, more than a thousand years later, another young O'Neill,

who became William Blake's father, born some ten years after the Treaty of Limerick, must, it seems to me, have determined to save those same traditions. For without his father's purposeful teaching, Blake could not have acquired his Irish learning. And when Blake saw the hopes which had inflamed him quenched in the reaction of 1792, and saw that once more "human thought was crushed beneath the iron hand of power," he turned to continue the purpose, the methods, and the work of Cennfaeladh and Suibhne Geilt. Suibhne, in his first encounter with St. Ronan who cursed Suibhne's race and the race of the O'Neills, threw the Saint's psalter into a lake. An otter restored the psalter to Ronan, "and neither line nor letter of it was injured." Blake recalled the story when he made Orc say in *America* :—

"That stony law I stamp to dust ; and scatter religion abroad  
To the four winds as a torn book, and none shall gather the  
leaves."

*Buile Suibhne Geilt* is not a collection of Suibhne's poems, but a prose narrative interrupted by lyrics which express the sentiments of the characters in various situations. Some of these lyrics are naturally attributed to Suibhne. Since Suibhne did write poetry, we may assume that his poems were the kernel of the tale, round which other poems were composed, until at last some writer ordered the whole into the more or less coherent story which O'Keeffe published. O'Keeffe believed, judging by the language of his text, that it may have been written any time between 1200 and 1500, that is more than 500 years at least after Suibhne's death. By the time this text was composed, the meaning of Suibhne's *Buile* was forgotten, and the narrator tries to find a rational explanation of his supposed madness. It was caused by the din and horror of battle which sent him flying from the field of Moyrath. Or it was caused by the curse of St. Ronan. Both explanations are given in the tale. Here is a brief summary of the *Buile* :—

St. Ronan Finn begins to mark out the site of a church in Dal Araidhe. Suibhne, the King, hastens to eject him, seizes the psalter Ronan is reading, and throws it into a lake. He is dragging the cleric away, when a messenger arrives from Conghal

Claen, summoning Suibhne to join him at Moyrath. Suibhne departs. An otter brings the psalter uninjured out of the lake to Ronan. Ronan curses Suibhne.

At Moyrath, before the battle, Ronan and his psalmists sprinkle holy water on the combatants, Suibhne among them. Suibhne, indignant, slays one of the psalmists, and pierces the bell on Ronan's breast. Again Ronan curses Suibhne.

The battle follows. Suibhne flees, takes shelter in a yew tree ; then, after some wanderings, reaches Glen Bolcain. For seven years he wanders through Eire, though all the time his fortress and his dwelling-place are in Glen Bolcain. Loingsechan pursues Suibhne. Suibhne visits Loingsechan's mill, and then goes to see his wife. While he is talking to his wife, some followers of his successor arrive, and Suibhne flees.

The nobles of Dal Araidhe send Loingsechan to seize Suibhne. Suibhne asks for news of his country. Loingsechan tells him falsely that his parents, his brother and sister, and his children are dead. Suibhne is caught and manacled by Loingsechan. The nobles entrust him to Loingsechan's care, but one day he is left in charge of the nun who looks after Loingsechan's mill. The nun challenges him to show how well he can fly. She flies after him from place to place till at last Suibhne flies into the sea at Dunseverick. The nun follows, and is drowned. Suibhne leaves Dal Araidhe, for he fears Loingsechan will punish him for the nun's death. The flight with the nun is interrupted by Suibhne reciting his long poem on the trees.

Suibhne proceeds to Roscommon, where at the brink of a well he began to partake of water-cress and water. A woman came from the erenach's house, and took Suibhne's water-cress from him. Further wanderings. Suibhne goes to Britain, and meets a geilt in a wood. They spend a year in friendship together. The British geilt has two names, *Fer Caille* and *Ealadhan*. The names show what geilt means, for *Ealadhan* means the "science" of the Druid, and *Fer Caille* means "woodman." The British Druid is in hiding from the "host of the king's household."

Suibhne returns to Eire, and in Glen Bolcain meets a woman geilt. They flee from each other. He visits his wife, who rejects him. Finally, to end his woes, he decides to entrust himself to



his own people. Ronan, fearing he will interfere with his church, curses him. As a result, Suibhne sees terrifying visions on Slieve Fuaid at midnight.

More wanderings. At length Suibhne went to Teach Moling. For a year Suibhne returns every night to St. Moling to tell him his story. Moling instructs his cook to provide food for Suibhne every evening. She does so, by thrusting her heel into cowdung, and filling the hole with new milk for Suibhne. Mongan, the cook's husband, is told that his wife favours Suibhne. He thrusts a spear in Suibhne, breaking his back. The news is brought to Moling, who curses Mongan, and promises heaven to Suibhne. The death-swoon comes on Suibhne, but he revives, is led by St. Moling to the door of the church, where he dies.

Suibhne's life after Moyrath appears to be passed mainly between trees and the neighbourhood of churches. For the tale is concerned not with physical but psychological events, and its theme is the opposition between the Druid and the Church. St. Columba, we are told, before Moyrath, offered Suibhne "Heaven and kingship,"—in itself an indication of the symbolic, not factual, purpose of the tale, for St. Columba was dead forty years before the battle. Instead, Suibhne becomes a needy geilt. In his actual encounters with Ronan, the objects of Suibhne's resentment are the bell, book, and holy water. His sufferings are the focus of the tale: the saints have no real personality. The mill might seem foreign to the theme: it is in fact integral. Mills were a characteristic feature of early Irish monasteries, and the Irish word for *mill* is borrowed from Latin. The mill is a symbol of the Church.

The Druid's wand was of yew, and he made charms by writing in yew. So when St. Moling declares: "Delightful is the leaf of this book, the psalter of holy Kevin," Suibhne, for his Druidic function, retorts: "More delightful is a leaf of my yew in fair Glen Bolcain." It is worth noting that the word *ban* which I have translated by "fair," its common meaning, also means "mad."

The phrase, "the yew in fair Glen Bolcain," in itself suggests the meaning of Glen Bolcain. It is the glen of poetry, Suibhne's

"eternal dwelling." In the *Buile* we read: "It is there [i.e., to Glen Bolcain] the madmen of Ireland used to go when their year in madness was complete." "The madmen" were aspirants to Druidism. Though the prose narrator says Suibhne reached Glen Bolcain in the course of the year after Moyrath, Suibhne's lyric which follows this statement begins significantly:—

"A year to last night  
Have I been under darkness of branches,  
Between flood and ebb."

Suibhne, learning Ogham secrets, is made acutely conscious of the life of his mind, the flooding and ebbing of its energy. The poem goes on to describe a period of abstinence, silence, and solitude such as is common everywhere in the education of shamans. Suibhne recalls that he was a king. Now "I am a poor man without power in Glen Bolcain."

A glen in Kerry is still called "the glen of geilts." Druids did no doubt frequent certain woods, but it is doubtful if any particular place was known as Glen Bolcain. I shall return later to this question. Meantime it is perhaps worth noting that as Brigid, the Celtic goddess of poetry, became St. Brigid, the name of the glen of Druidic poetry was given to a St. Bolcan.

Suibhne, Druid of the yew, is naturally represented "in the yew" or "on top of the yew." In the story of Diarmuid, the giant Cam, spirit of the rowan, is described as one "whom neither weapon wounds, nor water drowns, so great is his magic. . . . He sleeps in the top of that Quicken tree by night, and he remains at its foot by day to watch it."

The Druid might consider himself to be possessed by the spirit of any Ogham tree. But certain trees were particularly associated with him, the yew and rowan with his function as charm maker, the fern and apple with his poetic function, while the hazel, the nut of wisdom, represented his science.

With this guide, we can interpret a few obscure passages in the *Buile*. *Collan* (page 40, second line) is a hazel-nut, and the phrase in which it occurs means "Since my hazel-nut does not survive among the ivy-bushes."\*

\* It is probable that corpan has been substituted for collan in last stanza page 130, and the original reading meant "My hazel-nut is full of death,"

In the Word-Ogham of Morann MacMain, the apple-tree was called "the shelter of geilts or hinds." Suibhne says (middle of page 38) :—

"Certain it is I am Suibhne Geilt,

A man who sleeps under shelter of an apple-tree."

Here Suibhne defines what a geilt is. The example of these two lines enables us to amend a corrupt passage (page 40, fourth stanza, last two lines). These lines mean :—

"There are many apple-trees in Glen Bolcain

To protect my head."

The word to be restored is *chaomhadh*, protect.

It was natural that Druids hostile to Christianity should seek among trees for signs and names to designate the Church. There was no *p* in old Irish, and Patricius was at first called Cothrige. Five new signs were added, when we do not know, to the Ogham alphabet. Of these, the first two, a St. Andrew's cross and a circle, are recognised Christian signs for Christ and the circle of perfection. The third is perhaps a fish hook, the fourth is a doubled St. Andrew's cross, and the fifth a harrow. The Cross was called in Irish "the harrow of penance." What sounds these signs represented is not very clear : for instance, the third might represent *ui* or *uu*, but certainly the last two were used to represent the Latin letters *p* and *X*, Patrick and Christ. *P* was associated with the gooseberry and *X* with the witch hazel which, the Primer informs us, was a phantom of the hazel.

The Ogham ivy and hawthorn were also used to symbolize Christianity. The hawthorn was called by Oghamists "a terror in woods," for its Irish name also meant "terror," and it was the first of the group of Ogham letters represented by strokes to the left of the central stem, the unlucky left hand turn. Blake was returning to the thought of Irish Druids when he described the wheel of religion as going "from west to east, against the current of creation." The ivy was in old Irish *gort*, which also meant a ploughed field, and the ploughed field was necessary to the Christian mill. Moreover, the parasitic ivy in time killed the trees on which it lived. Blake repeated this thought also : "As the mistletoe grows on the oak, so Albion's tree on eternity."

We need no longer wonder why Suibhne is unrealistically depicted as fleeing from ivy, or why he finds ivy or hawthorn an uncomfortable resting-place. The burden of his song is: "The hawthorn that is not soft-topped has subdued me, has pierced me." In Blake's work, the hawthorn is the symbol of Christianised Eire, the ivy is the son of Los who becomes a Christian priest, and briars and thorns represent the prohibitions of the priest.

The mill was a symbol of the Church. One stanza of the *Buile* makes this clear (page 72, second stanza):—

"By the mill of spiritual bread  
Your people have been ground,  
O wretched one, O weary one,  
O fierce Loingsechan."

The last two lines are not otiose: they are intended to establish firmly the meaning of the first two. For they recall the harrow, the sign of witch-hazel, which in Morann Mac Main's Word—Ogham, is called "the sigh of a weary one," i.e. *ach* or *uch*. *Ch* of Christus was pronounced in Irish like *ch* of Scotch loch.

Joyce, in his *Social History of Ancient Ireland*, describes the murder of Donagh and Conall, sons of the King of Ireland, at the mill of Mailoran, who, according to Joyce, was St. Ciaran's strong man. A contemporary poet, writes Joyce, composed the following stanza on the event:—

"O mill, what hast thou ground? Precious thy wheat!  
It is not oats thou hast ground, but the offspring of Kervall,  
The grain which the mill has ground is not oats, but blood-  
red wheat,  
With the scions of the great tree Mailoran's mill was fed."

Joyce tells a gruesome tale that the princes were murdered by being pushed through the mill. It seems possible that the tale was an elaboration on the misinterpreted theme of the poem.

Suibhne repeats the theme in another image:—

"As the women scutch the flax,  
So my people were beaten  
In the battle of Moyrath."



An image which Blake recalls when he describes Vala, "spinning the flax of human miseries."

A question presents itself here: Why is Loingsechan of the mill supposed by the prose narrator to be a friend of Suibhne? He suggests that Loingsechan may have been Suibhne's foster-brother. How much the narrator understood of Suibhne's verse is doubtful. Frequently he merely elaborates what he wrongly supposes to be the meaning of a poem. The scribe who wrote the manuscript edited by O'Keeffe troubles to write down an odd, and oddly unnecessary, prayer for the drowned nun: "By my God, may the nun's feet be broken." Certainly no one whose native language was Irish could have missed the fact that the names and generations of the servants of the mill have usually sinister meanings. The nun is Fury, daughter of Black Hermitage. It is, I think, probable that Loingsechan is only another name for Ronan. Ronan is connected with *ron*, a seal, and Loingsechan with *Loingsech*, a mariner. In a poem on the "cliff of Farannan, abode of saints," Suibhne speaks of "many faces of seals coming hither from the ocean." To the Irish word for faces, an adjective *rionn-tanach* is added. *Eadan* means *face*, but carries the suggestion of presumptuous face: *rionn* is merely an intensive prefix, and *tanach* means "a washing." Suibhne's meaning appears to be that "many baptising bold-faced missionaries come hither from the ocean."

The name given in the *Buile* to the erenach of a church in Tyrconnell is Faiblen, of the race of Farmer, son of Black Beetle. *Faiblen* means "false sorrow," and appears to have been adopted to contradict the idea in *Soisgeal*, i.e. good news. We shall not, therefore, consider the way in which Moling's cook feeds Suibhne as an illustration of ancient manners. It appears to be symbolic. Elsewhere Suibhne says of the nun:—"Woe to whom she has given his dog's portion."

Suibhne's grotesque riding competition with the nun becomes clear when we know that *marcach duana*, literally, "a rider of verse," meant one who recited a poem. Suigne and the nun compete in making verses. They call each other by names which are meaningless. Probably these names were *Tailchennach*, adze-head, i.e. Christian, and *corr-ghuinech*, sorcerer, the latter being the nun's name for Suibhne.



In the prose narration the competition is in flying. In early periods of religious history, conflicts between different religions were little more than competitions in psychic gifts between their priests. Laeghaire, the High King, at Tara is said to have asked St. Patrick and a Druid to cast their books into the water so that it might be seen which would escape uninjured. The Druid answered: "I am unwilling to come to the test by water with that man because he has water as his god." Bonwick quotes from a late life of St. Patrick, published in 1625, the following curious account:—

"A certain magitian that was in high favour with the King, and whom the King honoured as a god, opposed himself against St. Patricke, even in the same kind that Simon Magus resisted the apostle S. Peter; the miserable wretch being elevated in the ayre by the ministry of Devils, the King and the people looked after him as if he were to scale the heavens, but the glorious Saint, with the force of his fervent prayers, cast him downe into the ground, where dashing his head against a hard flint he rêdred up his wicked soule as a pray to the infernall Fiendes."

The flying nun, called Fury, is intended to suggest another idea. Irish saints were given to cursing. Successful cursing was looked upon in much the same light as successful prophesying. The ancient Irish goddess of Fury and War was Macha who appeared as a royston crow: her name *Macha* came to mean a raven. The first Irish cathedral was built at Armagh, Irish Ard Macha. The victims of cursing priests naturally remembered that Armagh had the name of the ancient furious goddess. Blake called the priest a raven, and wrote in his *Song of Liberty*: "Let the priests of the Raven of dawn no longer in deadly black, with hoarse note, curse the sons of joy." The raven of dawn is Macha.

Water represented Christianity, but strangely we find in the *Buile* a long poem in which Suibhne is supposed to lament that the wife of an erenach has robbed him of his water-cress. It is a misunderstanding of Suibhne's thought, with consequent alteration of the text. The woman is a personification of Irish culture. Suibhne laments, not that she has taken water-cress from him, but that she has accepted it from the Church.

“ O woman, who pluckest the water-cress  
And takest the water

Alas, o little woman,  
Thou wilt not go the way that I shall go,  
I outside among the trees,  
Thou yonder in the house of friends.”

There is a brief exchange of verses between the woman and Suibhne, which Blake enables us to understand. In her immortal lament in the second night of *Vala*, Enion declares :—

“ I have planted a false oath in the earth ; it has brought  
forth a poison tree,

I have taught pale artifice to spread his nets upon the  
morning.”

Enion is the inspiring spirit of the Druid, repenting that the Druid kept his knowledge to himself, the better to exploit the ignorance of the people. If only he had shared with them his poetic enlightenment ! Too late Suibhne proposes :—

“ Let us make a bargain just and fitting  
Though I am the spirit of the yew-tree,  
Take thou my poet's cloak and apple,  
Leave the little bunch of water-cress.”

From this poem we understand the strange incident in which Suibhne meets a woman geilt in Glen Bolcain : the two geilts hide from each other. In the poem from which the incident is elaborated, Suibhne wrote :—

“ A woman geilt fleeing from her man,  
Story unknown.”

The woman geilt is Suibhne's own inspiring spirit. Students of Blake will recognise how much, how very much, in Blake's work, continues the thought contained in this sentence of Suibhne.

(To be continued)

# MANGAN IN AMERICA, 1850—1860

MITCHEL, MARYLAND AND MELVILLE

*By Francis J. Thompson*

"Do you see what I have done?" he asked softly. "Without passing a solid thing from my hand to yours, I have put words into your head, and they're the words of a story. Now you will carry the story back in your head to America, and perhaps you will tell the story, too, or perhaps you will write it down. And after a while I will die, but over in America will be a story of mine going around, without ever stopping from going, one to another, and so I won't be dead at all, in one way of thinking. That's what I have done this day. God bless!"

—Attributed to O'Conaire by John McNulty  
in *The New Yorker*, Sept. 10, 1949.

POOR Mangan! He put words into Longfellow's head, but, unlike O'Conaire, he received no credit while he was alive. As early as November 24, 1843, referring to the instalment of Mangan's *Anthologia Germanica*, which had appeared in January of the same year, Longfellow wrote from Boston to his friend Ferdinand Freiligrath: "Have you seen the translations from your poems in the *Dublin University Magazine*? They are not very literal, but exceedingly spirited, and excite a good deal of commendation from all readers." Two years later Longfellow included at least ten of these translations in his ambitious anthology, *The Poets and Poetry of Europe* (Carey and Hart, Philidelphia, 1845). Perhaps he might have discovered James Clarence under all his disguises in the *Dublin University Magazine*, but how was he to know that Mangan didn't prefer anonymity. Longfellow is guiltless compared with T. A. Mooney, the American correspondent for another Dublin periodical, *The Nation*, to which Mangan also was contributing. Mooney called him Charles Mangan in *A History of Ireland* (Boston, 1846).

The diaspora of Mangan's Young Ireland admirers in 1849 has at least a *post hoc* relationship to the discovery of James Clarence Mangan by America. The discovery seems to have occurred at New York, in the pages of *The Nation*, *The Irish-American*, *The Knickerbocker*, *The American Whig Review* and *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*.

The precursors were the two especially designed for emigrants, *The Nation* and *The Irish-American*. I do not have access to

a file of the *Nation*, a weekly newspaper which Thomas Darcy McGee commenced in New York on the 28th of October, 1848, with the advice that it was "to be devoted to Ireland and her emigrants, and the European democracies." But Littell's *Living Age*, which was a sort of *Reader's Digest* in those days, on December 1, 1849, under the caption "Irish Temperance Hymn," reprinted Mangan's "The Coming Event," from *The* (New York) *Nation*. The authorship was not given in *Living Age*, but since McGee had undoubtedly appropriated the poem from the Dublin *Nation* of September 22, 1849, he probably knew that Mangan wrote it. On the other hand, *Irish-American*, in its Poet's Corner (December 2, 1849) named him author of "Still a Nation," which it reprinted from the Dublin *Irishman*. And on July 19, 1851, it published a poem, "James Clarence Mangan," by "Ossian."

In 1850 *The Knickerbocker* started the new year off by publishing "The Spectre-Caravan. From the German of Freiligrath." It bore the signature "'German Anthology.' JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN." In May it reprinted "The Sunken City," signed "Mangan's Anthology. Mueller." And in June there was "An Original Family Picture," with the signature "German Anthology. J. Clarence Mangan." Is this from the *Dublin University Magazine*? Is it a translation?

Mein Herr Painter, will you now,  
Will you paint us right, Sir?  
Me, the goodman, and my frau,  
WILHELMINA SCHWEITZER,  
And our sons, ADOLPH and JOE,  
And our daughters, whom you know,  
PEGGY, LIZZY, KITTY,  
Bouncing girls and pretty.

There are five stanzas.

In July, 1850, *The American Whig Review*, to which Mangan's admirers, Thomas Devin Reilly, Joseph Brennan and, probably, John Savage contributed, published "The Poets and Poetry of the Irish," by T. D. McGee. McGee's essay began: "In the preface to his noble collection of European Poetry, Mr. Longfellow expresses his regret that he had not some specimens of the Celtic Muse to include in it." McGee proposed to supply some translations from "the Celtic Muse," along with a running

commentary. Starting with Sedulius, presently he came to "St. Binen, or Benignus." At this point he reprinted James Clarence Mangan's "The Will of Catharier Mor" [*sic*], which he described as a translation of one of St. Binen's or Benignus' "metrical chronicles or records." The will or testament was followed by the translation of a quatrain "written by that complete poet, Lughair! 'A world-famed, illustrious, honorable man, / The Pride of his tribe in his day, / King Cathaeir, the glory and prop of each clan, / was killed by the Fian, in Magh Breagh!'"

By the August number McGee had progressed from St. Benignus to "Brian Boromhe" [*sic*]; and, requisitioning Mangan's version of the "Lamentation of MacLiag for Kincora," he slyly took title by saying it "has been thus translated." He described MacWard as the source of the lengthy "A Lament/ For the Tironean and Tirconellian Princes Bu-/ ried at Rome," but again Mangan was not named as translator. Nor was he even credited with "Dark Rosaleen," the Irish of which was stated to have been written "by one of the Bards of the O'Donnell's." At this point McGee's conscience may have bothered him, because Mangan's name reappeared in connection with "The Dream of John MacDonnell"; but McGee lapsed again and failed to identify the englisher of "The Captivity of the Gael./ Translated from O'Sullivan." The article ended with McGee's "The Celts," preceded by the observation: "The recent poets of Ireland. . . . Mangan, Davis, Duffy, McCarthy and Ferguson are as Celtic as Carolan, or the Clan Bards of the Middle Ages." And this is the way Mangan was discovered by the readers of *The American Whig Review*; for neither his *German Anthology*, nor yet his name, was mentioned when his translation of "(Another) Coptic Song" from Goethe appeared in March, 1851.

*The United States Magazine and Democratic Review* was next. In 1850-51 John Savage's long review of Griswold's edition of Poe appeared serially. This was the essay in which Savage compared Mangan with Poe, claiming that Mangan was the greater poet and that Poe had undoubtedly read his contributions to the *Dublin University Magazine*. Subsequently there was a



series of four articles by Charles Carroll Leeds, in 1851, "Some Irish Poets." Two of them described Mangan in superlatives and hinted that he was well-known in America.

"Some Irish Poets" began in September, 1851. After a eulogistic exordium devoted to Thomas Davis and Mangan, Leeds announced that the Irish poets to be considered were all "of the 'Young Ireland party.'" The rest of his first article is an appreciation of Thomas Davis. The second, October 1851, introduced Mangan. Presently there were some inaccurate, though interesting, biographical data. For example:

Mangan was principally supported by the *Dublin University Magazine*, to which he and Samuel Ferguson were the principal contributors. Here was published the "Lays of Many Lands," translations from almost every language ever known to the world; portions of the German Anthology, the *Literae Orientales*, and many miscellaneous poems, national and imaginative.

Then Leeds quoted twelve of Mangan's poems.

The third article (November) concluded with, and the fourth (December) was devoted to, shorter notices of (J. De Jean) Frasier [*sic*], R. D. Williams, Francis Davis, D. Florence McCarthy, M. J. Barry, John Savage (giving his sonnet on "Mitchel" and saying that many of his writings have appeared "in this Review" since he came to the United States, e.g. "his critique upon E. A. Poe, which is, perhaps, the best known of all his late writings," and Joseph Brennan, who "closely resembles Mangan."

I haven't been able to find out anything about Mr. Leeds, but I would take a calculated risk that he knew Brennan personally, that Brennan had supplied him with a file of the *Dublin Irishman*, and that Brennan told him the Hafiz story. I am convinced of this because Leeds said that Brennan "some months ago" published "Exile's Dreams" in *The American Whig Review*. (It actually appeared in June, 1851, p. 506). And he gave a ballad by Brennan which "has never before been published: 'Come to me, dearest, I'm lonely without thee.'" I may also guess that Leeds knew enough German to make the following shrewd criticism of "The Ride Around the Parapet":

The original of this was a short narrative poem by Rueckart, entitled "Kuhngunde of the Keinst," marked by no great vigour and beauty.

Mangan's "Ride Around The Parapet," on the contrary, is one of the strangest, finest, and most fascinating poems written in the present century, and may challenge competition. The delineation, first, of the haughtiness and pride of Lady Eleonora Von Alleyne, her triumph over the slaughter of the six and thirty knights, her sudden love for the gallant Margarve Gondibert, her remorse and fear when she thinks that "he but rideth to perdition," all belong to Mangan, and the catastrophe is certainly his, for, as we have already said, he delighted in such quaint peculiarities, and it must have been delicious for him to "transmogrify" the stony-hearted beauty into a wooden image at her own castle gate.

I suppose it would be too much to say that when Mitchel landed in New York, in 1853, Mangan was "the talk of the town." But it does seem likely that Mitchel's edition of Mangan's *Poems* would have attracted more attention than it did six years later. As it was, Mitchel shortly began to publish *The Citizen*, and, although I have never seen a file of the paper, I know that Mangan's name appeared at least in the *Jail Journal* which ran serially from January 14 to August 19, 1854.

Then for three years Mangan was gone—at least, I can find no trace of him in any new publications. But he was not forgotten. In 1857 C. A. Dana's *Household Book of Poetry* came out in New York. As Mitchel correctly states, the new anthology contained two of Mangan's oversettings: "The Minstrel" from Goethe and "The Sunken City" from Mueller. I expect they were collected from the *German Anthology* (1845) since neither appears in Longfellow's *Poets and Poetry of Europe*. ("The Sunken City" was in *The Knickerbocker*, 1850). It was in 1857, also, that Mitchel began publication of the weekly *Southern Citizen* in Knoxville. Although I have never seen a file of it, I suspect that James Clarence Mangan was familiar to its readers because later, when the paper was moved to Washington, D.C., in 1858, Mitchel was probably preparing his Mangan anthology, and he must have been under compulsion to publish some of the poems he had collected.

## II

In 1859 *Poems/ By/ James Clarence Mangan;/ with/ Biographical Introduction By/ John Mitchel* was published in

New York by P. M. Haverty. Review copies were sent at least to *The Southern Literary Messenger*, *Harper's*, and *The Atlantic Monthly*.

*The Southern Literary Messenger*, famous because of Poe's association with it, was a distinguished monthly publication at Richmond, Virginia. The anonymous reviewer, presumably the editor, John R. Thompson, was most complimentary both to Mitchel and Mangan. Mangan's "The Maiden's Plaint," from Schiller, was given with the observation that the poem has been "faithfully rendered by Coleridge, freely by Bulwer, and most gracefully, as all will agree, by Mangan." "Twenty Golden Years Ago" was reprinted as a sample of Mangan's "original poems," with the observation that it recalled Beranger and Thackeray. (Nov. 1859, pp. 394-7).

*Harper's* and *The Atlantic* gave the new book less attention. *Harper's* allotted approximately a column and a half of its "Literary Notices" to the anthology. The review is little more than a condensation of Mitchel's "Biographical Introduction." *The Atlantic Monthly* made no comment and merely included the book among the "Recent American Publications Received by The Editors of the Atlantic Monthly." (January, 1860). But a copy bearing the inscription "The Editor of the/ Atlantic Monthly/ with the Publisher's Compliments" found its way into the Harvard Library. Inside the cover is the information: "The Gift of/ James Russell Lowell/ Smith Professor/ in/ Harvard University,/ 17 April, 1860." Lowell, of course, was the editor of *The Atlantic* at that time.

Two other Americans who certainly read the Mitchel anthology were James Ryder Randall and Herman Melville. Randall particularly liked "The Karamanian Exile."

There's care to-night in Ukbar's halls,  
Karaman!  
There's hope too, for his trodden thralls,  
Karaman! O Karaman!  
What lights flashed red along yon walls?  
Hark! hark!—the muster-trumpet calls!—  
I see the sheen of spears and shawls.  
Karaman!





I believe that he met and admired "To Laura" between 1855 and 1859. Perhaps there was a copy of Ellis in the Georgetown library. Or perhaps he became familiar with the volume through some Irish-American acquaintance. Thomas Devin Reilly, John Savage and John Mitchel were all in Washington while Randall was a student there. And Joseph Brennan and R. D. Williams lived in New Orleans.

Strictly speaking, Brennan had died in 1857, but words of his lingered in people's heads. He had married John Savage's sister after arriving in New York from Ireland. And, by the way, in Griffith's appendix to Mitchel's *Jail Journal* it is stated that "Come to me, dearest, I'm lonely without thee," was written for her. Soon, 1854, Brennan and his wife were living in New Orleans. Many years later a correspondent, "Celt," wrote to the *Irish World* from that city, February 14, 1878, on "How to get rid of 'Stage Irishmen,'" He said *inter alia* :

In 1854 the late Joseph Brennan was editor of the New Orleans *Delta*. In the winter of that year Barney Williams gave a round of his low Irish (so-called) comedies here. The gifted poet of '48 severely criticised each performance in the columns of the *Delta*. The result was that one evening Williams was treated to a shower of eggs, driven off the stage, and not let finish the play billed for that night. Williams left New Orleans and never returned for five years—till long after poor Brennan's death; for while the young patriot lived, no manager would bring Barney to our city." (I.W., March 9, 1878.)

Brenan remained on the *Delta* until the year he died, and "Celt's" letter shows what a lasting impression his patriotism had made in the community. Perhaps his enthusiasm for Mangan had a similar, posthumous issue, specifically in D. C. Jenkins, who came to the *Delta* in 1857. This is the more plausible if, as I suspect, it was Brennan who told Leeds about Mangan and supplied him with a copy of Hercules Ellis.

But if Jenkins knew not Joseph Brennan, perhaps he had met Mitchel, or R. D. Williams, both of whom were in New Orleans in 1858. In his life of Mitchel, William Dillon tells of Mitchel's visit there in January to lecture on the Sepoy Mutiny :

And what made this visit still more enjoyable to Mitchel was the fact that he had several friends in New Orleans whom he was really glad to





Thou wilt not cower in the dust,  
(Maryland, my) Maryland!  
Thy beaming sword shall never rust,  
(Maryland, my) Maryland!  
Remember Carroll's sacred trust,  
Remember Howard's war-like thrust,  
And all thy slumberers with the just,  
Maryland! My Maryland!

“Maryland, My Maryland,” made Randall a celebrity. He often reminisced about the circumstances which accompanied its composition. In the *Augusta, Georgia, Chronicle and Constitutionalist* of May 1, 1866, speaking of a fire which destroyed Poydras College, he lamented the news with a quotation from Mangan, saying: To the writer it is full of pathos, because it recalls to him the memories of ‘Twenty Golden Years Ago.’” Later, in 1886, he wrote to Francis Fisher Browne, editor of the *Dial*, who was preparing an anthology of Civil War poems, *Bugle Echoes*: “In 1860-61 he who pens these lines was, though very young, a professor at Poydras College, upon the Fausse Riviere of Louisiana. There . . . one sleepless April night, in 1861, the poem of ‘My Maryland’ was written.”

The story is developed still further by George C. Perine in *The Poets and Verse-Writers of Maryland* (1898). He published a letter written by Randall in which Randall told of riding over to the post office from Poydras College for the New Orleans *Delta* "which contained an account of the passage of the Massachusetts' regiment through Baltimore and the bloody fight consequent upon that intrusion (April 19, 1861)." On returning to Poydras, being great with poesy, Randall couldn't get to sleep: "the whole mass of perturbed utterance was associated with some kind of musical notation which I cannot now recall." He continues with an apparent reference to Mitchel's introduction to the *Poems*:

On my desk was a copy of the "Poems of James Clarence Mangan," one of the most gifted and miserable of bards. There was one poem of Mangan's professing to be of Oriental origin but really original, called "The Karamanian Exile," which impressed me greatly. I turned once more to that noble and passionate outburst, and the metre of "My Maryland" was solved.

Randall died in 1908. Two years later Andrews' edition of his *Poems* appeared. In his account of "Maryland! My Maryland!" Mr. Andrews said that Randall wrote the poem April 23, 1861, and noted:

The editor of the *Delta*, Mr. D. C. Jenkins, had already published some of Randall's verses, and had sent him early in April a copy of the poems of James Clarence Mangan, whose "Karamanian Exile" "solved the meter. . . ." As Randall always freely acknowledged his debt to the "gifted Irish Poet" for the meter of *My Maryland!*, it is to be hoped, now that his collected poems are published, that this note will render ridiculous the further "discovery" from time to time of "Mangan's influence" on *My Maryland!*

So much for Randall's discovery of Mangan and the awesome effect which it has had and is having on generations of Maryland, Iowa, Michigan and New Jersey school children who sing their various State songs at assemblies. Herman Melville's discovery was less consequential. It seems to me that the author of "Moby Dick" particularly liked "The Time of the Barmecides" and flattered its author by "The Age of the Antonines." Here are the opening stanzas of each:

My eyes are filmed, my beard is grey,  
 I am bowed with the weight of years;  
 I would I were stretched in my bed of clay,  
 With my long-lost youth's compeers!  
 For back to the Past, though the thought brings woe,  
 My memory ever glides—  
 To the old, old time, long ago,  
 The time of the Barmecides!  
 To the old, old time, long, long ago.  
 The time of the Barmecides. (Mangan.)

While faith forecasts millennial years  
 Spite Europe's embattled lines,  
 Back to the Past one glance be cast—  
 The Age of the Antonines!  
 O summit of fate, O zenith of time  
 When a pagan gentleman reigned,  
 And the olive was nailed to the inn of the world  
 Nor the peace of the just was feigned.  
 A halcyon Age, afar it shines  
 Solstice of Man and the Antonines. (Melville.)

It is not enough to cite such an example, or to argue that Melville, a New Yorker, may well have heard of Mangan in the

early 'fifties. There is more concrete evidence to hand. F. B. Freeman in *Melville's Billy Budd*, Harvard, 1948, has the following cryptic entry in an appendix, entitled "Books in the Harvard College Library/ Once owned by Herman Melville": "Mangan, James Clarence *Poems* (N.Y. 1859). Marginalia."

In the twentieth century Melville's reputation has risen among American intellectuals. Even his poetry is now held in such esteem that the leading avant guard publisher in the United States, New Directions, in 1944, brought out *Herman/ Melville/ Selected Poems/* edited by / F. O. Matthiessen. It is possible to fancy Mangesque touches here and there in this anthology. "The House Top" is reminiscent of "The Tocsin, Or Alarm-Bell" (from "The Lay of the Bell"), "A Dirge for McPherson," by its very title, suggests Mangan's elegiac over-settings from the Irish, "In The Prison Pen," has a theme similar to "Siberia." "The Age of the Antonines," however, is not in Matthiessen's anthology. It may be found in the Constable edition of *The Works of Herman Melville*, Vol. XVI (pp. 273-4).

Verily, John Mitchel may be accused of inaccuracy when in his essay on "James Clarence Mangan: His Life, Poetry and Death" (1859) he speaks of the "almost unknown name and writings of James Clarence Mangan." Indeed, Mitchel may have done Mangan's reputation as much harm as good. For, during the Civil War, the North regarded Mitchel with such distaste, that his recommendation was a kiss of death. So it was that even in a review of the poems which the *Christian Examiner* published in 1865, the critic (probably A. W. Williams) went out of his way to disparage Mitchel, then languishing in a Federal penitentiary at Fortress Monroe.

Nevertheless, although Mangan's body had long been a mouldring in his grave, it is quite clear that over in America was poetry of his "going around, without ever stopping from going, one to another, and so" he wasn't "dead at all, in one way of thinking . . . God bless!"

# DRAMATIC COMMENTARY

By A. J. Leventhal.

THE GENTLE MAIDEN. By Donal Giltinan. The Abbey Theatre playing at the Queen's Theatre.

VENUS OBSERVED. By Christopher Fry. Gate Theatre.

HASSAN. By James Elroy Flecker. The Dublin Marionette Group.

THE DRAGON. By Lady Gregory. Bernadette Hall.

SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR. By Luigi Pirandello. University College Dramatic Society.

Mr. Giltinan is firmly on the path towards finding a formula of his own for stage entertainment. More and more he is beginning to realise that psychological treatment of his characters; introspective speeches, whilst all very well in their way, do not always make the most effective theatre. In *The Gentle Maiden* he sets out to entertain. In this respect, his experience as Inspector Keene in his radio sketches has stood him in good stead. He has learned how to use the dramatic ingredients that send a thrill through the body with a sensually agreeable shiver down the spine. The audience, having once realised that the Abbey Theatre was not trying out a new mode but rather taking to its bosom an old one, the well tried mode of the thriller, settled down to enjoy the amalgam of laughs, succession of surprises with the catharsis brought about by theatrical shock therapy.

Mr. Giltinan, aided by an enthusiastic and efficient cast, succeeded in his prime intention. Though slow in its beginnings, the play, when it gathered momentum, spun itself out in a whirligig of excitement. We were a little suspicious of the gentleness of the central character and like all readers of detective tales were glad that we had indeed cause for our distrust and welcomed her unmasking. The playwright concentrated more on the psychology of his audience than on that of his characters. And why not! It is always an achievement for an author to know what will penetrate the iron cortex curtain of a sluggish brain whether its owner occupied the higher or nether parts of the house or sat in aristocratic stolidity in the dress-circle. His problem is not so much the writing of a play for the exhausted man of affairs and his weary secretary but one that will tire neither the one nor the other.

With the unobtrusiveness that is the mark of the ideal producer, Ria Mooney entered in the spirit of the play and decided its tempo. Vere Dudgeon once more displayed his artistry in his apposite settings.

Mr. Christopher Fry has arrived. What Stephen Phillips at one time at the beginning of the century seemed on the point of achieving—popular acclaim of verse drama—and failed because he held too firmly to an outmoded and outworn nineteenth century tradition, has been accomplished in some measure by the



author of *The Lady Is Not for Burning*. Much of Mr. Fry's success is due to his fresh approach. Like Phillips, he owes much to the Elizabethans, but he skipped the nineteenth century slavish and uncritical pastiche of its models and added a quality that comes out of our own time.

That is was the public itself that discovered Mr. Fry and not the *cognoscenti* is pointed out by Mr. Derek Stanford in his newly published biography of the poet-playwright.\* This should be a comfort to those authors who feel that the hand of the dramatic critic lies all too heavily on the balance of popular judgment. Longford Productions should be thanked for keeping us abreast with the march of Fry and mounting a brave performance of *Venus Observed*.

The plot is one which lends itself to Mr. Fry's colourful cascade of verse. A Duke with money and a past decides to settle down to a "resignation of monogamy" and quaintly appoints his son to the role of Paris. His task is to choose his own stepmother from among three of his father's former loves. The unexpected arrival of the attractive Perpetua, daughter of the Duke's agent, confuses the situation, for both father and son succumb to her charm. It all ends happily, but not before one of the discomfited ladies, who had aspired to the apple of Paris, set fire to the Duke's mansion.

It seemed to us that the acting honours went to Aiden Grennell, who made Reedbeck, the Duke's agent, a living character, weak and lovable. Godfrey Quigley, as the Duke, was disappointing. Though he spoke his lines with clarity, he looked far too young and was much too suave for an old *roué* for whom

An ancient love can blow again, like summer  
Visiting St. Martin.

The rest of the cast was impressive, but at times Iris Lawler as Perpetua did not appear to believe her lines. Another objection—a minor one—was that the producer did not make full use of the farcical possibilities which the author provided by bringing on to the stage the footman and butler in their nightwear after the outbreak of fire in the Duke's mansion. Mr. Fry should have been given credit for his Elizabethan sensitivity in regard to the guffaws of the groundlings.

It was through soft Irish rain that we rode forth (in a bus) at evening, not to the desert wells, but to Bray to meet that sadistic old gentleman of the Middle-Orient—the Caliph Haroun al Raschid, who, in all his puppet glory, throned it in a Bagdad provided in the Little Flower Hall by the Dublin Marionette Group. It was worth the discomfort of the trip to be lulled once again by the luscious orientalisms of James Elroy Flecker's *Hassan*. The caliph was there lost in the Streets of Felicity and threatened by the King of the Beggars. We met likewise the yashmaked Yasin coquetting from a balcony, the sartorially resplendent poet Ishak, and Hassan himself torn from the aestheticism of his occupation as a confectioner to be caught up in the dubious benefits of royal Eastern favour.

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\* *Christopher Fry Album*. By Derek Stanford. Peter Nevill. 16s.

This was indeed an excellent choice for puppet production. The unreality, the lack of depth, the near-Chuchinchow quality of Flecker's fantasia—all these militating against a flesh-and-blood revival of *Hassan*, were the very stuff of successful puppetry. Who would ask for profundity from a hand-rotated marionette, bobbing and swaying, and miming in conventional gestures the pleasures and pain of human passion? Nevertheless, the playwright's verse, spoken with conviction and clarity by the unseen collaborators, brought out the ethos of the play as well as its emotional appeal.

Derek Green must be congratulated on a production which was as smooth as his jerky medium would allow. Unmindful of last buses, we remained gladly to the end to walk in sympathy with the shades of the martyred lovers

While softly through the silence beat the bells  
Along the golden road to Samarkand.

*Frankie and Johnnie*—an American folk ballad—was the curtain-raiser, and its mock-tragic theme was capably handled (the operative word) by that enthusiastic puppeteer, John Rowlands.

There are not nearly enough halls (let alone theatres) in this city to house worthy amateurs with worthy plays in their repertoire. There is something of a revolt among those actors who cannot push their way into the few available professional companies. It is as though they remembered the remark of the French statesman, M. Briand: "La guerre est une chose trop sérieuse pour que l'on la laisse aux militaires," and fashioned it to their own problem thus: Drama is far too serious a matter to be left to professionals.

It is a healthy viewpoint. Let us not wonder then that we have to thank Oliver Bradley for a presentation of *The Dragon* at the Bernadette Hall. This play, Lady Gregory confessed, began in the shadow of tragedy and ended as a gay-coloured comedy. Mr. Bradley's team of players, who seem to have been recruited mainly from Austin Clarke's Lyric Theatre (itself a homeless nomad), went further than the 1919 Abbey Theatre production and let us recognise *The Dragon* for what it really is—a coherent Pantomime.

There should have been more children present to enjoy the antics of The King with the insatiable appetite (Tom Nolan in the Abbey comic tradition), the acceptably-stock stepmother Queen (Ita Little devastatingly and uncompromisingly domineering), the brave little Princess (Eileen Murray sweetly unconventional) afraid of nothing except, understandably, dragons; the Prince (Oliver Bradley every inch one even in a chef's hat) who could conjure up a meal with less hocus-pocus than a professional medium one's dear departed, his two comic aunts (who should, of course, be Ugly Sisters—seriously caricatured by Mairead Connaughton and Evelyn MacNiece), the placating Nurse (Peggy Hayes at her very best), and finally—since space is limited—the fearsome dragon itself tamed by the valiant Prince, a dragon which seemed to have come from the workshop of the Bray puppeteers.

An unforgettable evening! Those are indeed amateurs of the stage who bring skill and enthusiasm to the production of a play worthy of the time and energy spent upon it.

The previous sentence applies equally to the University College Dramatic Society as evidenced in their production of *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. Pirandello, despite his vacillating Hamletism and tendency to indulge in what George Nathan called "prolonged unrestrained argumentation," has still his old charm. This play has not lost its novelty and is the most successful of his efforts to use Einsteinian relativity as a dramatic vehicle. The University College players attacked this piece with brio and demonstrated that enthusiasm backed by intelligent production can make up for lack of professional experience. There was a memorable performance by Mairin O'Farrell as the Stepdaughter.

## Art Notes

By Edward Sheehy.

ROYAL HIBERNIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS.

WATERCOLOUR SOCIETY OF IRELAND.

PAINTINGS. By Jean Miller Quinn. At the Dublin Painters' Gallery.

If 'the old order changeth giving place to the new' be a law of all human affairs, its operation in the Academy is so gradual as to be almost imperceptible. The infiltration of *fauves* so hopefully allowed a few years ago has stopped short; and indeed many of the 'wild beasts' admitted have turned out to be very tame cats. On the other hand, the level of purely academic craftsmanship, the only contemporary academic virtue, has fallen considerably with the death of James Sleator, who at least did something to atone for the vulgar sentimentality of some of the second-hand imitators of Orpen among our portrait painters. Some portraits at this year's exhibition combine the crude sentimentality of the chocolate box with the chromatic flatulence of the bad colour photograph.

Louis le Brocquy is still the only modern painter of distinction to attain the status of Academician, which is curious when we consider that his work is least suited to the academic milieu. One might almost say that it was anti-academic in its undisguised preoccupation with a very personal sense of pictorial architecture. No doubt the Academicians realise this, as witness the fate of *The Family*. At any rate, his *The Bathers*, not by any means an outstanding example of his work, hangs austere and uneasily among the drawingroom pieces; while his pencil *Study for 'Fearful World 1948'*, a work at once delicate and full of meaning, is lost among a lot of pretentious nonsense. By contrast, what might

be called the Expressionism of Daniel O'Neill and Colin Middleton is more at home on the Academic walls; perhaps because with both the primary object is the communication of an intensely personal feeling about life, and their *matiere*, while creative and exploratory, a vitalisation of traditional means. However, the effect of Middleton's *Sultry Landscape, Ballymote*, a work full of life and colour, is to make the conventional landscapes look futile and moribund for all their finesse. O'Neill's *The Old Priest*, quiet and meditative in feeling, exquisitely subtle in quality, is one of the finest pictures I have seen for a long time. His *A Young Prince* has a different kind of perfection: the polished and graceful detachment of a Renaissance lyric.

Patrick Hennessy has achieved the remarkable feat of producing a forebodingly Gothic atmosphere in a pseudo-classical setting in his practically monochromatic *Two Monsignori walking on the roof of St. Peter's. The Sea Wall*, from the same palette, is on an even grander scale; but its content justifies neither its size nor the dominating position of its hanging. However, I must say that its relative emptiness (like that of a back-drop without the characters) is infinitely preferable to the enormous and hideous example of what passes for religious art which defaces the opposite wall. George Collie's *St. Brigid receiving the veil from St. Mel* (centre section of altar piece for Church of St. Brigid, Killester) is a formless concoction based on stock studio poses, crude in colour and completely without feeling. This is really the *reductio ad absurdum* of academic painting, all the more regrettable for its size and the fact that it will hang in a place of public worship. Unfortunately, it is even possible that if it were offered to the Municipal Gallery of Modern Art in lieu of Louis le Brocquy's rejected *The Family*, its acceptance would be assured by a jury dominated by Academicians.

Few of this year's portraits are impressive, even in terms of academic portraiture. Leo Whelan has effectively embalmed sundry sitters and George Collie imbued certain others with a crude and hectic simulacrum of life. Robertson Craig bids fair to become our fashionable portrait painter of the future. His *Miss Gervaise Matthews* has the grace, elegance and poise of the salon picture, while his *Viscount Powerscourt*, besides having a restrained and dignified naturalism, is interesting for its use of a harmonious palette dominated by subtle tones of green. Sir Gerald Kelly with *Jane LI* and a portrait of Sir Hugh Walpole, is, as usual, the impeccable academician, as befits the President of the Royal Academy. But for all its amazing virtuosity and unperturbed good taste, the result is dead. Though portraiture was never John Keating's *metier*, except as a draughtsman, his *Dr. Noel Browne* has a certain nervous vitality which raises it well above the formal level. Roger Shackleton is a young painter whose work has been hitherto unknown to me. I must confess that I was deeply impressed with the quality of his work in *Beatrice Maxwell, Quaker Girl*, which had a bold simplicity of line and fresh clean paint. John Armstrong is another newcomer whose work seems to have attracted a good deal of attention, mainly, I think, for its polish and superficial expertise. To my mind, his work is decadently precious where it is not merely decorative.



In spite of his recent and successful one-man show, Maurice MacGonigal was well represented, notably by two excellent and straightforward landscapes, *The Great Trench, Clonsast*, and *Derryounce Bog*, both in possession of Bórd na Mona. Harry Kernoff's most noteworthy exhibit was an unusually sensitive head of a child, entitled *Young Israeli*. Charles Lamb shows himself a colourist of some power in *The Curragh Race*, with its sultry and consistent atmosphere. I remember, also, and with pleasure: a number of delightful ballet studies by Mary Krishna; a small, sombre and beautifully composed oil, *Paris Quayside*, by Barbara Warren; *Fishing Pool*, by Caroline Scally, for its good colour; a number of lively and original monotypes by Basil Rakoczi; a simple and freely painted oil, *Dalkey*, by F. le Jeune; and *The Back Garden*, by George Wallace, which was both free and spirited.

As usual, sculpture was not very prominent. Among the few exhibits Seamus Murphy's simply formalised *Madonna and Child* and Oisín Kelly's vigorously expressive, though somewhat Rodinesque *Youth at Piano* stood out.

Of recent years the Watercolour Society of Ireland has come to be a body of some significance, at whose exhibitions one can expect a fair proportion of interesting work. This, I believe, is due to the more exacting and enlightened choice of new members for admission. The present trend is away from the pallid and amorphous painting of pretty scenes and colourful flower-studies and towards a concentration on solidity, strong colour and formal values. Caroline Scally, who is well represented, shows an original flair for composition and a decidedly personal approach to paint. I liked the nice calligraphic freedom of Max Maccabe in *Winter*; the solidity and richness of colour in Ernest MacDowell's *Forkhill*, and the sprightliness in Sylvia Cooke-Collis's *The Mall, Cahir*. Unfortunately, the Society carries a heavy burden of enthusiastic amateurs whose dead-weight only time, I fear, will remove.

Jean Miller Quinn is a young American painter whose work is essentially modern in spirit. This, her first one-man exhibition, shows that she is a serious student of her medium and a courageous explorer of its creative possibilities. I am particularly glad that she decided to include a number of untitled Studies in Line in the exhibition because they show clearly the personal genesis of her more formal compositions. Initially she has a good eye and a sensitively nervous line, full of subtleties and curious nuances. This, translated, expresses itself in her near abstract pictures such as *Still Life* or *The Red Room*, as composition in which the balance is so precisely adjusted that it acquires something of the fascination of the *mobile*; or, alternatively, as in her *Ave Maria* or *Martha* the imbalance is stabilised by a network of black, suggesting the leading of stained glass. On the other hand, she can be tender and even lyrical while still careful of formal values, as in *Girl and Boy* or *Girl in Flowers*. *Birth of Venus*, in which thickly painted flesh tints glow against a virtually black background, though a lovely picture, is hardly consistent with the rest of the exhibition. It may represent an aspect of her talent which she has not yet had time to explore. Jean Quinn has undoubted talent and should have an interesting future as a painter.



## BOOK REVIEWS

### THE BACKGROUND OF MODERN IRELAND.

A HISTORY OF IRELAND UNDER THE UNION: 1801 TO 1922: With an Epilogue carrying the story down to the acceptance in 1927 by de Valera of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. By P. S. O'Hegarty. Methuen and Co. 811 pages. 50s.

The title of this great book is slightly misleading. It does not chronicle the happenings of the period, it leaves out a multitude of facts, even prominent ones. It assumes the reader is familiar with the broad outlines of the story. It is rather an essay on the evolution of Irish nationalism during the Union period, 1801-1922, a contemplation of the different forces at play, the "garrison nation," the "underground nation," the fusion of two traditions, the resurgence of the Gael, the persistence of the fundamental separatism of the Irish nation. The point of view of the author is uncompromisingly but not unreasonably separatist; he writes as a life-long member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and for the first time gives to that secret organisation of which he is intensely proud its due place in the history of Ireland since 1858. It reminds this reviewer of Taine's *Les Origines de la France Contemporaine*, that great analysis of the forces that brought down the *Ancien Régime* and laid the foundations of modern France.

The book contains an index of twenty pages, but no bibliography. The author's sources are simply everything about Ireland, 1801-1922, and readers who remember the many bibliographical notes communicated to this magazine by the author over the years will not find the implied claim extravagant. There are no footnotes. He gives his authorities in brackets as he goes along. The style is plain and direct, sacrificing often enough elegance for clarity. He has at times forcible and vivid images: "Lord Roden's Orange Societies sprawling on the North like a drunken octopus" (p. 72); "The Irish movement of the nineteenth century was a mass mind, thrusting forward on every artery of national life on which it could get a footing, like the sea coming in over the sands, slow but persistent and sure. English power in Ireland, English craft in Ireland, was like so many sandhills which could divert the tide but could not stop it. In the eighteenth century the underground nation was just holding on, in the nineteenth century it emerged, and the history of the nineteenth is the history of its various thrusts for independence" (p. 107). At other times he sinks to Americanisms like: "He (O'Connell) was one of themselves, with the same slant upon life as they had" (p. 274), and that awful word, "set-up." But, in general, we haven't time to notice the style, we are carried along, sometimes breathlessly, by the intensely dramatic character of the marvellous story of Ireland which Mr. O'Hegarty unfolds.

A special feature of the book are the quotations. We are given so many and, at times, so copious quotations from contemporaries (sometimes several pages of

a speech of O'Connell, of Parnell or of Gladstone or of letters of Wellington and others) that this book could be placed side by side with the recent three-volume "Documentary Record of Ireland" compiled by James Carty. These quotations are among the most illuminating and interesting parts of a book where all is interesting. Incidentally, they enable one to follow the decline of the stately classical English of the first half of the nineteenth century and the emergence of the more modern journalistic style sometime between the Young Irelanders and the Fenians. We get odd bits of information from them. From a letter of the Duke of Northumberland we hear (p. 66) of the fever of excitement aroused in 1830, not by the revolution in France, but by the revolt of the Belgians against the Dutch, and that due notice was taken then, as later by the Young Irelanders, of the fact that the Belgian priests encouraged and blessed the rebels. From the "Irish People" of the 7th May, 1864, we hear that "Doctor Cullen sent his money to the secret association that directs the revolutionary war in Poland."

The theme of the book is generally that found in the long quotation given above; the upward thrust of the underground nation. The abandonment immediately after the Union of the national position by the 18th century patriots (Emmet was the last of them; to him, not only to his heroism, but to the practical if daring nature of his plans, Mr. O'Hegarty pays a noble and moving tribute); the assumption of the garrison or ascendancy role by their descendants all through the nineteenth century (all in their way Irish, nevertheless: the term Anglo-Irish has no meaning, says our author); the crushed Gaelic and Gaelic-speaking race first taught to stand up and look up by O'Connell; the winning of Emancipation against most determined opposition, a necessary moral stiffening before beginning the greater and, as it proved, too great task of Repeal; O'Connell's perplexities, the dilemma to which his unshakable opposition to force, to a "drop of blood" brought his constitutional agitation; the misunderstanding with those eloquent, romantic and, in the end, seemingly futile revolutionaries, the Young Irelanders, who, however, against O'Connell's eighteenth century classical indifference to national characteristics, did become the precursors of Irish Ireland; the final sinking of Old Ireland in the horrors of the deliberately permitted famine; all that, with magnificently generous tributes to O'Connell and Davis, is told in the first 400 pages of the book. The latter half of the book is much more dramatic. From the nadir of the fifties Mr. O'Hegarty sees the first stirring of the seeming corpse on the dissecting table, in the foundation of the Fenian brotherhood in 1858. From then on right to the end of the book we are conscious of a silent executive of unknown men, not wild, not mad, soberly intent on keeping alive the idea of physical revolt, yet cautiously and patiently awaiting their day, encouraging in the meantime all that tended to strengthen the national idea, the Land and National Leagues, Parnell, the G.A.A., the Gaelic League, the old Sinn Fein of Griffith with its compromise, offered to the British and the Unionists, of the 1783 position—the fusing of the two traditions, that of the ancient nation and that of the Protestant patriots—until at long last Carson and Bonar Law gave them their chance to come into the open. The story of the Fenians is told with much new detail. A respectable insurrection could have been produced in 1865 were it not for the over-caution of Stephens, just as a real fight might have eventuated in '48 had the Young Irelanders not held back John

O'Mahony and his thousand drilled and armed men at Carrick-on-Suir. Cautiously they held their hand in the eighties when Coercion and Bloody Balfour would have justified revolt; and even in 1916, and after it, the "organisation" was not unanimously spoiling for a fight. When the great fight was over and the truce and the Treaty had been won they did not develop megalomania as others did, but left their members free to accept or reject the Treaty, the Supreme Council itself, however, recommending acceptance (p. 769).

We get a most vivid, full-length picture of Parnell and his movement. The Pigott affair, the divorce and the split form a welcome break in the long record. Parnell was obviously the hero of the author's boyhood and he can hear nothing against him. It is clear that O'Hegarty considers it was a mistake to instruct the Irish in England to vote Conservative in 1885; but he is too loyal to say it in so many words. His attitude towards the relationship of Parnell with Mrs. O'Shea is a bit too complacent for Catholic readers; and, at the end of the great man's career, he is too one-sided, too fierce in his condemnation of the anti-Parnellites. On his own presentation of the facts, there seems to be a case for them. A tremendous tribute is paid to the sense of justice and to the sincerity which inspired Gladstone's efforts for Ireland.

Passing over the period of twenty years of resolute government combined with killing Home Rule with kindness, we come to the period from 1912 or 1913 onward which is still familiar to most of us. One by one appear faces that we have seen and remember. Mr. O'Hegarty, though a veteran I.R.B. man already in 1916, did not approve of Easter Week. Like Bulmer Hobson, to whom, with Robert Lynd, the book is dedicated, he believed that the Volunteers should have been kept for defensive purposes. He has not a generous word to say for Pádraig Pearse, and, to this reviewer, that is the great blot on the book. After all, an organisation professing physical force has got to fight sometime or become merely absurd; and Mr. Hobson, whose sincerity and courage are not in question, was shown to be a false prophet when he predicted that an offensive would last but a week, and then that "it would be the end of everything." On the contrary, the insurrection proved a magnificent success; too much so, because, as Mr. O'Hegarty says over and over again, it put the Sinn Féin movement and Éamon de Valera into the "straight jacket of the Republic," out of which we couldn't get without trouble. Even Griffith was powerless against those sixteen dead men who were "loitering there to stir the boiling pot," as Yeats wrote (p. 717). To Mr. O'Hegarty that was the first error of the glorious period of 1917-1921. The second was allowing the struggle to sink from the moral plane, the old Sinn Féin plank of passive resistance in every way at home to Dublin Castle rule, to the physical plane of the war between the I.R.A. and the British forces, regular and irregular. The present reviewer does not agree with him on the latter point. The fight was inevitable and necessary. Even had it been stamped out in 1920, the rest of the programme would have been carried on with all the greater vigour, thanks to the self sacrifice of the fighting men.

When we come to the Treaty, the split and the Civil War, it may be argued that the book ceases to be history and becomes political, partisan and completely

one-sided. The present reviewer agrees so completely with Mr. O'Hegarty's presentation of the case against Mr. de Valera and feels so strongly about it all still, like him, that he may be considered incompetent to pass judgment on this part of the book. To Mr. O'Hegarty the Treaty was the victory of the Irish nation in the long, long struggle, begun by O'Connell and carried to final triumph by the political genius of Griffith and the magnetic leadership and personality of Michael Collins; spoiled after it was gained by the egotism of De Valera, so that the "money-changers" have now taken possession of the temple. Perhaps it is not as bad as that. Perhaps they couldn't have been kept out. He obscures a bit too much in his final pages the fact that Partition was made secure before we were offered anything; and affirms too strongly that there was no difference between "Document No. 2" and the Treaty except in phraseology, when his point should be rather that the terms of reference of the Treaty negotiators excluded consideration of external association.

But "Sinn Fein did its job." That is his final word. We may say that he did his job too: a wonderful achievement these 800 quarto pages: *a monumentum aere perennius*.

LIAM O BRIAIN.

GLEANINGS FROM ULSTER HISTORY. By Séamus Ó Ceallaigh. Cork University Press. Basil Blackwell, Oxford. 15/-.

Séamus Ó Ceallaigh's book is an enquiry, based on the Annals, the Genealogies, State Papers, Papal Registers, place-names and traditions, into little known historical events and facets of the life of central Ulster from pre-Norman to early modern times. If genealogical and topographical studies generally intimidate the common reader, they are here an illuminating and comprehensive part of the bitter historical pattern. For example: "This tree has a fascination of its own, for from the twelve sons of Conchobhar mac Fearghail mhic Maíle Dúin sprang a wealth of surnames many of which, to this very day, are common in Ó Catháin's country, despite repeated clearances, transportations, deportations, starvations, evictions, and a particularly obnoxious landlord system under the London Companies, whose Governors were wont to feast seasonally at the expense of their famishing tenantry between the Bann and the Foyle." Or again, referring to the battle of Belat in 1076:

"The year of this battle, for instance, was the very time when Henry IV was preparing to cross the snows to Canossa. If that monarch had had his finger on the pulse of European politics, as any reputable Emperor should have had, he must have got first word of the current calamity at Belat. And as he reflected on the evils that were threatening his dynasty, was his mind awed by the fate of Cianachta, in comparison with which his own house, back through Henry the Fowler, even to the baptism of Wittekind, was really nothing but a thing of mushroom growth, making the whole galaxy of the Salic Emperors a procession of the merest parvenus?"



Of particular interest is the section, "The Culture of Trian Conghail and Cois Bhanna", with its account of Captain Somhairle's devotion, military exploits apart, to compiling in the early seventeenth century his anthologies of Irish verse and story.

"For this 'notable villain' had the piety to collect and conserve for his countrymen three literary treasures that are beyond price. We can imagine Somhairle spurred on by the appeal of his task and dazzled by the splendour of the horizon to which he had turned his eyes. One can only bewail the contrast between the conviction of this soldier of fortune, who might well have conceived he was under no debt to his native land, and the almost complete indifference to their singular literary inheritance which has been forced upon our people since Somhairle's day."

The evidence that Somhairle was obviously a man of education has led Séamus Ó Ceallaigh to an examination of the scholastic *milieu* in which he must have grown up—and also to a fulminating eloquence:

"In canonical succession from Cambrensis to Bacon, it was the interest of English writers to cover this nation with obloquy. Bacon, who lent his genius to the earliest moves behind a plantation in Ulster, doubts if we should ever be worthy to receive the benefits that Cecil had in store for us; and then, with that cant which was the courtier's way at the time, he goes on to suggest that he would withdraw all theological duress and let the Irish stew, for the moment, in their own spiritual juice, for, he says, ' . . . until they are cleansed from their blood, incontinency and theft, which are now not the lapses of particular persons but the very law of the nation, they are incompatible with religion reformed.' Were theft and blood very far from the mind of any compatriots of Bacon's?"

The calumny and ignorance—Sir William Temple, Hume, Davys and Boate are also quoted—justify anger; but Séamus Ó Ceallaigh's enthusiastic counter-obloquy is perhaps a little naïve in an historian of today. *Gleanings from Ulster History* is, however, a valuable work of scholarship.

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF OLIVER ST. JOHN GOGARTY. Constable. 30s.

It has been said that no poet should ever publish his first book. More soberly it might be added that among lyric poets few, or none, should ever publish their Collected Poems. Nor would the range of poets to whom the warning applies be made narrower if all editions of Collected Poems were imposing volumes, beautifully produced, highly priced and limited to five hundred copies. Lyrics which, from between the covers of some "slim volume," sang out bravely, secure in power and beauty and pride of individuality, seem shrunken, subdued and uncertain of themselves in the company of a hundred by the same hand. The change, of course, is in the attitude of the beholder. The mere title "Collected Poems" at once removes the standard of appreciation from individual to general, from immediate to enduring. With his Collected Poems a poet invites you to place him, to assess his achievement in terms of the history of his Art. And when the poet is Oliver Gogarty a slight sense of oppression—as though



playtime were over and lessons must begin—invariably accompanies the discovery that the poems are divided into sections carrying no such gay titles as *Elbow Room* or *Wild Apples* but headed, portentously, *Odes and Addresses*, *Satires and Facetiae*, *Love and Beauty*, *Life and Death*, and *Elegies*. Such is the heavy gilded cage where Lesbia's sparrow lives out its latest immortality. Moreover the poems are preceded by no fewer than three prefaces. Horace Reynolds's personal reminiscences bring back the gay and witty raconteur, the boon companion; and, remembering *Ulysses* and a host of anecdotes and glorious parodies, one throws off the heaviness induced by the preliminary formalities and the lamentable *Ode* for the Tailteann Games, feels oneself quicken joyously to find *To a Cock* among the *Odes and Addresses*, and turns in happy expectation to *Satires and Facetiae*. And here in all their wicked gaiety, their lusty hardihood, are *After Galen*, *A Pithy Prayer Against Love* and other memorable indiscretions. Yet, as one reads on, one is aware of something amiss, of Dionysus disappearing and in his place a sweet old thing who has exceeded her accustomed glass.

But the publication of the *Collected Poems* and the manner of their presentation is clearly a claim for recognition of the work of a serious poet. Yeats thought of Gogarty as "one of the great lyric poets of our age," and there are lyrics to support that view. *The Crab Tree*; *Exorcism*, *Golden Stockings*; *Begone, Sweet Ghost*; *With a Coin from Syracuse*; *Non Dolet* and *Per Iter Tenebricosum* are such. There are also hundreds of individual lines, couplets and short passages which suggest that Yeats was right in his opinion which he based, partly at least, upon Gogarty's quality of "gay, stoical . . . heroic song." Yet, strangely, the underlying mood of the *Collected Poems* is not so much gay, or heroic or even stoical; it is rather prim, moralistic (not about sex but about beauty and art and courage and breeding). There is a concealed or explicit didacticism, and the celebration is less of great qualities themselves than of an attitude towards them. Maybe this explains, even more than the easy grace of classical allusion and metaphor, why so many of the poems lack tension, individual inevitability. It is all very well to say, as in *The Forge*:

I know right well that a song should be  
Airy and light as the leaf of a tree  
Light as a leaf that lies on the wind,  
Or a bird that sings as he sits on the linde,  
And shakes the spray when he dives for flight  
With bright drops sprinkling the morning light;  
For song that is lovely is light and aloof  
As the sparks fly up from the well-shod hoof.

But that very passage is so weighted with commonplace, so dreary with obvious facility that it is neither light nor aloof. Lightness, it seems, is no more the necessary companion of fluency than sincerity of cleverness. All through these pages there are lovely things, lines that cry out for quotation, witty, concise, exquisite and true; but there is an incorrigible levity which spoils all—not just the levity which may be the lesson experience has learned of life, but levity in the pursuit of a jealous Art. The last piece in the book is the *Elegy on The Archpoet*. It is a poem which at times invites comparison with the work of its

subject, W. B. Yeats. Yet its author has included and retained in it such lines as these :

Now you are gone beyond the glow  
As muted as a world of snow;  
And I am left amid the scene  
Where April comes new-drenched in green,  
To watch the budding trees that grow. . . .

Not much of 'the fascination of what's difficult' was felt in their making.

W. P. M.

DR. E. Æ. SOMERVILLE. A Biography. By Geraldine Cummins. Andrew Dakers. 21s.

Collaborations, successful collaborations, are rare enough in literature still to command special attention. And the collaboration of Edith Somerville and her cousin, Violet Martin, is unique in Ireland's literature. As the publisher proclaims, this book is the first biography of Edith Somerville to appear. It also has the distinction of being the only study of the cousins or their writings which has yet appeared.

Edith Somerville's incandescence often eclipses the finer light with which her cousin shone, but it scarcely justifies the statement on the title-page of this biography, that Edith Somerville was "the leading member of the famous literary partnership." And though Miss Cummins feels "there was a latent strain of pessimism in Martin's nature" which "imparted power and occasionally harshness to her writing," many readers would prefer to censure Edith Somerville as a caricaturist than dismiss Violet Martin as a pessimist. Miss Cummins seems almost wilful when she undervalues the fastidious critical faculty that Violet Martin lent to the collaboration, as even her partner concedes :

" 'Martin had an exquisite feeling for style. She worried and worried, seeking the right word. Even when she was in such pain she could not herself write and I used to read her what I had written, she bullied and drove me until at last each sentence was to her liking. . . . It was such good training for me. . . . Afterwards, when Martin had gone, it helped me so much. . . . '

When Miss Cummins feels impelled to say, "I suspect that Edith was the dominant partner" or "Edith was the wayward genius who . . . was the senior partner," she should reconsider Edith Somerville's own words and Edith Somerville's own estimate of their special faculties. And she should re-examine the textual evidence before suggesting, "Indeed Martin seems to have been almost over-critical at times." Some of Edith Somerville's post-collaborative writing could have profited from fastidious criticism.

Miss Cummins met Violet Martin only once, for a few minutes, not long before her death. Her friendship with Edith Somerville commenced fourteen years later, in 1927, and developed during the last twenty-two years of the writer's life. Therefore, in a biography devoted to the partner she knew best, it is not surprising that her assessment of the collaboration favours Edith Somerville. The slenderest part of the book is the section which spans the period 1858-1919, the period that embraced the collaboration.

The most original and important feature of this biography is the author's appraisal of Edith Somerville. It is a hopeful sign in Ireland when a biographer can affirm the aristocratic identity of a writer whom it has become a habit to disparage for viewing life through the window of the Big House. Miss Cummins is probably the first to have affirmed Edith Somerville's stature without apology:

"She was proud and generous of heart—a great literary artist, a great lady, an Irish aristocrat in the finest sense of the word. The big world and the little world of West Carbery are incomparably the poorer for her passing. She was almost the last of the few nineteenth century Irishwomen of the Great House who served and loved the country people and gave of her best to them."

She is also among the first to emphasize—perhaps to recognize—the influence of Edith Somerville's art upon her writing, in a collaboration which often suggests the partnership of painter and poet. Miss Cummins claims that "descriptions of landscapes in Edith's writings were undoubtedly influenced by the artist's training, and perhaps it was the painter's visualizing habit that often led her to vivify conversation by making a picture in words of a very ordinary event." In her writing Edith Somerville exploited colour and light in the free and dextrous way that her cousin used poetic devices and sound. Even Edith Somerville's imagery—often animal imagery—favours kinetic, representational figures, while her cousin's imagery is frequently evocative and abstract. And dramatic pictorialism, employing space, light and colour, became more conspicuous in Edith Somerville's writing after Violet Martin's death.

This biography is also the first authority which acknowledges that Edith Somerville "was not intellectual and was unanalytical." She was evidently as vigorous and emphatic in her thoughts as she was in her writing and drawing. In her non-fiction she is seldom attracted to the reflective themes which distinguish her cousin, and was content to be more concrete and representational.

The personality of Edith Somerville, which her biographer has specially endeavoured to capture, has heretofore eluded most writers. Miss Cummins' observations are candid, acute and original:

"... she was rather possessive in her affections. And though, at times, she made in that connection a coaxing bid to get her own way, no one took defeat more gracefully. She was impatient of stupidity—especially in men. And then, as one Carbery woman remarked, 'She had her bark!' It has been said by one who knew her well that she was 'subconsciously jealous of men, feeling herself as capable—if not more so than they in many departments of life—and with justice in many points'... She was over-ambitious... [but] She was first and last an artist."

The biographer has also noted such unconsidered features of Somerville and Ross as the fact that they had visited the Aran Islands in 1895, while Synge was still a student living in Paris. Violet Martin recorded this visit in an essay in *Some Irish Yesterdays*, and both she and Synge were curiously prompted to describe the native pampooties in similar terms. In addition, Miss Cummins is perhaps the only critic besides Stephen Gwynn who has commented upon the treatment of sex in the novels of Somerville and Ross. She also cites the strong masculinity in their books (in allusion to Edith Somerville's remark, "'All Jane

Austen's men are like male characters dressed up as governesses.' '''); but it often takes the form of antithetic masculinity in their novels, where male characters incline to the strenuous, virile type like Flurry Knox, or the effete, intellectual type like Christopher Dysart.

Sometimes, however, Miss Cummins is rather misleading, as when she says, "During 1929-1930 Edith Somerville spent a great deal of time on writing a comedy entitled *A Horse! A Horse!*"; for Edith Somerville began experimenting with this play based upon *Irish R.M.* incidents as early as 1921, after two Englishmen had approached her with the project. The imputation "that Edith Somerville would have been horrified by any moving picture based upon one of her stories" is also misleading, since in 1921 Edith Somerville expressed anxiety about her dramatic rights in some *Irish R.M.* stories which she regarded as adaptable to stage or film. And to ascribe to Edith Somerville a distaste for public readings from her work does not conform with the fact that she and her cousin engaged the actor William Fay to give a reading from their books in 1909.

In her recapitulation of the cousins' background, Miss Cummins ignores the disparity in their early environment though she traces Edith Somerville's character development from formative childhood days and though she is interested in the contrasts between collaborators. And there are only oblique references to the spiritualism which assumed a prominent role in Edith Somerville's life and in her work after Violet Martin's death, and which was an interest that she shared with her biographer.

The author has made one evident miscalculation on page 11, where she says, "the two cousins came to know each other at the respective ages of twenty-eight and twenty-five," for they were twenty-eight and twenty-four, as she later states, when they first met in 1886. And though this book is primarily a biography of Edith Somerville, there is surely space for the information that Violet Martin died as a result of a brain tumour, a biographical detail that is not generally known.

Occasionally Miss Cummins becomes transported with her subject. She extols Edith Somerville as a humourist and humour as a panacea for such ills as Fascism. However, when *Punch* once printed a carton caricaturing the Blue Shirts as a reptile, Edith Somerville composed an indignant letter rebuking it for misrepresenting the fine, patriotic young men who were Ireland's main bulwark against Communism.

A biography which hopes to be serviceable should include an index. Though Miss Cummins evidently shares Edith Somerville's impatience with indexes, a reader is helpless without one in a biography that is rich with such names as Yeats, Shaw, Synge, Dunsany, Gwynn, Æ and Moore. The jacket design of this book, which resembles a cook book cover, almost conceals the fact that Lennox Robinson has written a preface to the volume. The book also contains a new bibliography, compiled by Robert Vaughan, which supplements the list published by Elizabeth Hudson ten years ago, but her annotated American bibliography probably offers more popular interest.

Miss Cummins' biography of Edith Somerville is the first contribution, a welcome contribution, to the realm of Somerville and Ross, although a definitive biography and critical study still remain to be written.

C. S. WATSON,



CONTES OSSIANIQUES. By Roger Chauvire. Presses Universitaires De France.

This selection from the Ossianic cycle comprises most of the well known tales in which Fionn and the Fianna appear. There are also stories of the Sons of Tuireann and The Children of Lir.

M. Chauvire in an introduction attempts the thankless task of placing Fionn historically and mythologically and sums up the various theories of MacNeill, Kuno Meyer, Gerald Murphy and Professor O'Rahilly, none of which are entirely satisfactory, none of which, indeed, can be entirely satisfactory. It is quite possible that there was an historic Fionn; and that there was some association of soldiery called the Fianna is equally credible. But neither was accountable for the miracle tales they overlaid, this can be gathered at once; and any study of comparative mythology can strew the whole question with hints of older gods that had a common origin somewhere beyond the Mediterranean, thus putting the whole Fianna cycle away back into the mists. M. Chauvire is aware of this and seeks to equate Finn with a Gwynn ap Nudd and a certain Find, 'atteste par Vindo-bona (Vienne), Vindonissa, surtout Vindonnus, dieu celte, confondu par le suite avec Apollon, aux temps romains.' But the tales taken separately can be more explicit. Diarmuid and Grainne, for instance, and the stone cromlechs that top so many hills, and their war of association with Fionn, clearly point sun-wise to a celtic equivalent of Hercules and the cult of the white Goddess, the 'beds' being altars of worship and not the hotels-for-the-night function assigned to them by the popular tradition. Indeed, to read the tales as Alfred Nutt does, to assign to them a rationalising explanation of forgotten rituals as a basic origin, would appear to me to be the only way to take them. We have, after all, the same tendency in the Greek; there is, for instance in the play of Sophocles on the madness of Ajax, a hint of the substitution by animal sacrifice for the elder sacrifice of human beings. One regrets that no Irish scholar has made this comparative study in much detail. Outside of Robert Graves, whose intention is poetic, nobody indeed appears to have the necessary scholarship and the necessary divination. For a work of divination it most certainly would be, seeing that scholarship itself has failed so far to give some order to the vast mass of material now available.

The stories are well translated.

P. F.

GREEK LITERATURE FOR THE MODERN READER. By H. C. Baldry. Cambridge University Press. 18/-.

This must be one of the best introductory books to Greek Literature that I have come across. It is pleasantly and adequately written and while it is intended for those who have no Greek and but little knowledge of ancient history, it has all the certainty of having been written by a scholar who knows and loves his world well enough not to be dogmatic about it.

Professor Baldry surveys his scene first from the other side of history when Hellas had only one frontier, that of language. He ends with the Alexandrian age when literature had become a library, when the guts had gone out of things and the Greek spirit had declined into the vague and golden optimism that seems to have taken hold in the period following the Platonic dialogues. Professor



Baldry does not analyse this decay in the psyche, however, and indeed there is no reason why he should, but he points sharply to the psychological difference in the literature produced by the city-state and that which came into being after Alexander had widened the frontiers into a large empire.

Literature in this frame of history, even legendary history, takes its real place in life. Even Homer seems to come alive when his period is recreated. In my opinion, however, enough is not made of the religious rituals and practices that gave rise to the great Dionysian drama. This is the most important period of Greek Literature though it had none of the historical consequences of the Platonic period with which it was almost synchronous. Plato, indeed, seems to be for Professor Baldry—though he is careful not to make a display of his enthusiasm—the great artist of ancient Greece.

It is, of course, the Greece of the fifth century B.C. that matters most to us outside of Homer, and Professor Baldry recreates very ably the structure of that mighty atom, the Athens of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Aristophanes, the Athens whose community habits gave form to the Platonic dialogue and created that marvellous community-figure, Socrates, whose aim was not to expound any system of beliefs but to make men think for themselves; in other words to herald the arrival of the rationalistic intelligence to the western world where it has since become part of our mental processes. Athens, indeed, has rarely been as plainly presented as by Professor Baldry.

In matters of detail, too, this book shines. All the early poets of any size have been treated spaciouly and through quotation; and I can recommend the book to anybody who looks for something more than potted history and something less than a tome.

P. F.

**HORSES.** By George Gaylord Simpson. Cr. 8 vo. Pp. 247 + xxiv. Oxford University Press. 1951. Price 40/- net.

When we read that this work was about the Horse family in the modern world and through six million years of history we said to ourselves, this is what the Irish will really enjoy, for in a country like ours where horse breeding is such a valuable asset, where most true Irishmen are happier on a horse than anywhere else, such a subject is sure of a public. The horse dates back for many years, Stone Age paintings being made long before writing was invented. Writings have emanated from Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Cervantes and Darwin down to the newspapers of to-day. The book under review is about Horses as animals and is not devoted to horses for the pleasure of mankind, i.e. the chief interest is the animal and not its use. The history of thoroughbreds is described, but not the methods of handicapping or betting. Gaits are explained, but not riding styles. The various colours of the horse are given in detail; we were astonished at our ignorance of this part of the subject and the paragraphs on colour will repay the closest study. It is extraordinary to find what one can learn about life from this research on horses, especially the relationships between their structure and their way of life, how fossils are found and what they mean, the history of

the earth and the evolution of life. It is by studying the shapes of teeth and bones of fossils that most of life can be recorded for diversion and instruction. In this book an attempt is made, and, in our opinion, is made well, to summarise modern knowledge on the three main approaches to the study of animals as illustrated by the horse family, firstly, wild living animals, secondly, animal breeds and breeding, relationships to man, domestication and related subjects, and lastly, the historical approach, especially in relation to history against the broader background of the history of the earth and its life. Is evolution true or not? The author tells us that the story of the horse family provides one of the best means for studying the how and why of evolution; certainly it is thrilling to read the story of where the horse came from and how horses gradually changed from *cohippus* to the animal of to-day.

The work on Fossils, which constitutes a large part of this investigation, is fascinating. The fossil is a form of life; they are animals who through their own segments breathe, eat, drink, and breed. It is wisely pointed out that, like most other facts of life, we do not know all about fossil horses or the horses of to-day. Why do students devote their lives to the subject of fossils?

- (a) Fossils have a dollar and cent value, especially in the search for petroleum.
- (b) To increase our knowledge of the earth and its life.
- (c) The study of the principles and processes of evolution.

The title of Chapter I is "What is a Horse?" Most people would think there was a simple answer to this query but it is not as simple as it sounds. The zoologist's solution is a device called the Linnaean hierarchy which is explained fully. The value of horses was soon discovered by Mahammed who preached about them:—"Thy back shall be a seat of honour and thy belly of riches" and he nearly conquered the world with the aid of his Arab horses, which were the forerunners of the thoroughbred of to-day. However, in A.D. 732, they were unable to penetrate the mail armour of the Franks and were thrust into Northern Europe.

It is interesting to read that in spite of the mechanised condition of the United States that there are still ten million horses or mules in the country.

It is astonishing to find in the chapter on ancient breeds that there are sixty breeds of the horse and two hundred of the dog. There are two appendices: A. deals with where to see fossil horses; B. Where to read more about horses. In addition there is an excellent index. Many of the readers of this Magazine will agree with the learned Arab who said that Paradise on Earth is to be found on the back of a horse, in the pages of a book and in the arms of a woman.

The illustrations are numerous and varied in character. There are photographs of the early horse, the zebra, of the stone age horse, the cavalry and the mediæval animal and of most types of modern animal. Muybridge is shown with his special track in order to take motion pictures of the gait of animals. Those who are interested in great men will become acquainted with the appearances of most of the students of horse ancestry from Charles Darwin (1809) to M. D. Matthews, who died in 1930. There are also line drawings illustrating various technical details.

We have read and enjoyed the book but it is not for a large public. It is a masterly thesis which includes a wealth of detail; in fact, it may well be called an encyclopedia of the horse, which will be a necessary addition to the library of the research student whether he be a biologist or a veterinarian.

As usual the Oxford Press is to be congratulated on an excellent production.  
B. S.

THE EMERALD ISLE. By Geoffrey Taylor. The 'Windows on the World' Series of Travel Books. Evans. 12/6.

In his book on Ireland, Mr. Taylor neatly avoids the *longueurs* and the meticulous that threaten any attempt to satisfy at the same time the active and the armchair traveller. England exacerbates his pages with uncommon mildness, or perhaps one should say that, almost eschewing politics, he treats his subject with a discursive and felicitous pen that keeps the Irish virtues at a more courteous distance than the foreigner has learnt to expect. His chapters on history are restricted to natural and supernatural only. ("Beyond that, for what is in most of Western Christendom the main historical period, we have, instead of history without prefix, only an enormous contemporaneousness—an ageless era from Henry to Second of England to the Heroic Defence of the Post Office, during which Time is without structure, lacking those customary long-receding vistas, familiar temporal perspectives.") And, wearing his learning lightly, he indulges in cool asides. The scribe of the *Book of Kells*, for example, is called "a doodler of genius."

Mr. Taylor can defer to the expected, as when he recounts the story of the fifteenth-century Lynches of Galway, or describes Killarney and the Giant's Causeway; but generally the countryside, the cities, the vanished social scene, antiquities, art and personalities are filtered through his predilections and memories. And there are such pleasures for the reader as the account of a visit to the little-known Hermitage of St. Erc.

"Descending this wooded slope not without difficulty, by scrambling from beech-bole to beech-bole, we came suddenly and without warning to a flat area, perhaps halfway down, where three yew trees, old and bent, made a sort of frame for a vignette of deeper shadow in what was already shade—a shallow vista, it was, ending in the grey of a wall and an archway tangled in the spring-green growth of what I suppose one must call weeds.

"And, towering behind this ruined wall and overlooking it was a magnificent red rhododendron lit to the most brilliant vermilion by a stray stream of sunlight at that moment spilling its way through the trees.

"It was a memorable sight, reminding one of some sombre eighteenth-century masterpiece in oils. The Hermitage too, on nearer acquaintance, was of considerable antiquarian interest, with an altar-tomb and a subterranean crypt; and its Saint was at least a hagiological curiosity—for it is said that St. Erc, to cool his concupiscent temper, would stand all day up to his armpits in the Boyne water."

Mr. Taylor, as a guide, is urbane and fastidious, and his book is eminently readable,

THE SPIRIT ABOVE THE DUST. A Study of Herman Melville. By Ronald Mason. John Lehmann. 18/-.

The large measure of indifference to Melville's work during his lifetime is less surprising than the continuing incuriosity, outside his *Moby Dick* and *Billy Budd*, of the general reader, for, as Mr. Mason says in his critical study:

"It is in fact not an exaggeration to describe Melville as the only American writer of genius effectively to sink the confining consciousness of nationalism in the wider context of the human soul. . . . A common sailor home from a hard seafaring, he used the symbols of the sea to illustrate a quest that is the prerogative of no single nation but of every sensitive individual—the search for the rediscovery of that innocence in the human soul of which contact with worldly experience has deprived it. Of this search his books make up a single, deeply impressive record. So courageous is his attack upon his theme, so comprehensive and untiring his development of it, that he speaks to the universal condition of man as no other of his countrymen has ever spoken."

Melville himself insisted that "his imaginative life began where his physical vicissitudes ended", and Mr. Mason's book has a similar emphasis. Not that he denies the reader the biographical facts; but his concern is with the extraordinary vitality beside which Thoreau, Emerson, Whitman and Hawthorne "look sluggish", with the seascapes and landscapes of Melville's spiritual journey, its vehemently coloured figures, their often bitter resting-places, their flight towards dissolution. The peeled abandoned body of a white whale; the mute, deadly pattern of black and white in *Benito Cereno*; the bent reed that was Bartleby the Scrivener; a Mississippi steamboat; Billy Budd's last words from the yard-arm uttered "in the clear melody of a singing-bird on the point of launching from the twig": such seemingly disparate symbols are, in an important sense, interchangeable for, considerable as was Melville's development—admirably traced here in the novels and in some of the short stories and poems—his vision and purpose were consistent and original.

*The Spirit Above the Dust*, stimulating and finely perceptive, is a substantial contribution to the critical appreciation of a major writer.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ENGLISH NOVEL. Vol. I.—To George Eliot. By Arnold Kettle. Hutchinson's University Library. 8/6.

To write another, and brief, text-book on the English Novel up to the nineteenth century, and avoid either perfunctory or portentous treatment of such familiar material is no slight achievement.

"I think it is good to realize that the development of prose-writing is not a mean or humdrum part of man's history, but that it is linked close to his continuous, infinitely rich and various struggle to control his world and transform it, to evolve a philosophy adequate to his necessities and a society adequate to his desires. And particularly it is worth bearing in mind that prose is an advanced, subtle, precise form of human expression, presupposing a formidable self-consciousness, a delicacy of control which it has taken human beings untold centuries to acquire."



Such is Dr. Kettle's approach; and his indication of the historical development of fiction and consideration of its origins, his examination of some eighteenth-century writers and analysis of six famous nineteenth-century novels—from *Emma* to *Middlemarch*—have a wit, authority and a sensitivity that compel the reader's attention.

IN PLACE OF FEAR. By Aneurin Bevan. Heinemann. 6s. net.

Aneurin Bevan, the young miners' leader from South Wales, came into British politics filled with a passion to remedy the social inequalities of our time and that passion overflows into these pages. He was elected to Westminster in 1929, and has had a growing opportunity as Labour Minister to grapple with such problems as housing and medical service. In this book he tells the reader what he has tried to accomplish and explains the reasons behind this powerful social movement.

For Bevan it is axiomatic that advancing democracy will deal with social evils. "Political democracy," he remarks, "brings the welfare of ordinary men and women on to the agenda of political discussion and demands its consideration. Fascism and all forms of authoritarian Government take it off the agenda again." Democracy, in his view, has only just begun to function. It was not until 1929, that a British Parliament was elected on a basis of complete adult suffrage.

The chapter on "A Free Health Service" will be read with keen interest in Ireland for here we can observe the practical working out of a policy which has been the subject of fierce controversy. Bevan details the growth of the British health scheme and affirms his own belief:—

"Why should *all* have contribution cards if *all* are assumed to be insured? This merely leads to a colossal Record Office, employing scores of thousands of clerks solemnly recording in the most expensive manner what the law will already have said; namely that *all* citizens are in the scheme. The means of collecting the revenues for the health service are already in the possession of most modern states, and that is in the normal systems of taxation."

A sidelight on what happened before is contained in his note:—

"When the National Health Service started and free artificial limbs were made available, it was a revelation to witness the condition of the old ones left behind. It was a grim reminder of the extent to which the crippled poor had been neglected."

In forceful, pungent chapters the author outlines a general plan of world progress in place of the fear that now dominates Governments and peoples. He is no pacifist and holds no brief for those who would abandon military security. But he maintains that if more of the world's resources were devoted to improving miserable living conditions—particularly in Asia—and less on armaments, the dividend in terms of world security would be enormously increased.

This book is written with eloquent combativeness. One feels at times that the author is up on the rostrum emphasising his points with well-rounded rhetoric. Yet he conveys sincerity of conviction and an abundance of knowledge.



He believes in social planning and points out that the Marshall Plan, hailed as the bulwark of competitive individualism, needs far more bureaucratic machinery than any national effort. His argument is that world problems need large-scale planning and collective handling.

A good example of his provocative writing is this passage :—

“ Some visitors to Britain during the lifetime of the late Labour Government commented on what they described as the ‘ universal greyness of the social climate ’. And, of course, on the scarcity of porterhouse steaks in the fashionable restaurants. Rationing and ‘ Fair Shares ’ in the necessities of life was so ‘ dull ’. They complained of the ‘ lack of colour ’ in the cities. If they had looked closer they would have seen the roses in the cheeks of the children and the pride and self-confidence of the young mothers. They would have found more was being done for working people than in any other part of the world at that time.” ’

This book is an expression of the present political era which has given rise to the Welfare State. Bevan is the prophet of this era and has formulated the ideas and principles that seem destined to prove the storm centre of modern politics with himself as the man who has stamped his personality on the Labour thought of our day. With this book he draws nearer to leadership of the British Labour forces.

R. M. Fox.

BRITISH PAMPHLETEERS (VOL. 2). Edited by Reginald Reynolds. Allan Wingate. 21s. net.

This unique collection of controversial pamphlets from the French Revolution to the present time has been drawn from many sources and represents conflicting standpoints. Alongside Joseph Pease's indictment of slavery (largely on financial grounds) is Thomas Carlyle's defence of the slave status written in his most rhetorical, wrong-headed fashion. Edmund Burke—from the heights of his £2,700 pension—attacks earlier conceptions of the Welfare State. William Hazlitt lashes the venal writing of William Gifford, an obscure editor of the *Quarterly Review*, and ends with a magnificent burst of vituperation :—

“ Grown old in the services of corruption, he drivels on to the last with prostituted impotence and shameless effrontery; salves a meagre reputation for wit by venting the dribblets of his spleen and impertinence on others; answers their arguments by confuting himself; mistakes habitual obtuseness of intellect for a particular acuteness, not to be imposed on by shallow appearances; unprincipled rancour for zealous loyalty; and the irritable, discontented, vindictive, peevish effusions of bodily pain and mental imbecility for proofs of refinement of taste and strength of understanding. Such, sir, is the picture of which you have sat for the outline—all that remains is to fill up the little, mean, crooked, dirty details.”

More humorous—though not less vituperative—is William Hone's *Non Mi Ricardo!* dealing with the famous case of George IV against Queen Caroline, enlivened by Cruikshank's caricatures. Laurence Housman contributes his satirical quota to the Woman's Suffrage agitation and Robert Louis Stevenson

uses his pen like a lance in defence of the honour of Father Damien, friend of the lepers. William Morris and Edward Carpenter are also represented.

Of special interest is Henry Noel Brailsford's masterly analysis of the causes of the first Great War, especially concerning the ambitions of Tzarist Russia and the stirring of the witches' broth in the Balkan States, when the Austrian Archduke was assassinated. Mr. Brailsford writes with the authority of an expert of long standing. Though dealing with tortuous matters, he displays clarity of thought and style.

The inclusion of James Connolly's introduction to his *Labour, Nationality and Religion* brings Connolly's distinctive point of view to a wider body of readers. As the editor, Reginald Reynolds, remarks: "He was a revolutionary Socialist who was also a Catholic, a nationalist who was, at the same time, a prophet of internationalism." These views are implicit (and usually explicit) in everything Connolly wrote. It is curious that some of the would-be Connolly "experts" seem hardly to have realised this dual character of Connolly's thought. It is time they did. After all, Connolly's work is there to be read. And this contribution alone makes the matter plain.

Reginald Reynolds has made a good job of his selections and has written a careful introduction to each pamphlet, giving essential information in a succinct and scholarly way. This cannot be said of the general introduction by A. J. P. Taylor, which is a blemish on an otherwise excellent book. Most of the writers of these pamphlets are patently sincere. They rose to strike blows for human advancement. So we are presented with a brief history of social thought over the period. But all Mr. Taylor can find to say about this is that they will be read "merely for fun."

In this spirit of clowning, one presumes, he praises Carlyle's defence of slavery and writes in jeering fashion about the victimisation of a young Welsh University lecturer who was dismissed from his post for taking direct action on the side of Welsh Nationalism. He writes unjustly and impudently about Brailsford. Mr. Taylor suggests that it is difficult for anyone to adopt any advanced or unorthodox attitude to-day and to suffer for it. With the world full of fears and suspicions, as it now is, this is a particularly inept remark. His introduction is packed with such nonsense.

Mr. Taylor may plead, of course, that he was only clowning like a "barker" at a fair, to get people to enter the show booth. But in a serious publication containing the work of courageous social thinkers, such writing is tasteless and offensive. Yet it should not blind readers to the value of the book.

R. M. FOX.

OSLER: THE MAN AND THE LEGEND. By W. R. Bett. London: Heinemann. 1951.

Dr. Bett must have derived enormous pleasure from his investigations into the life and works of William Osler, for his efforts have been productive of a slender volume full of valuable and instructive material. In the compass of 125 pages he has amassed information which does not suggest that it is either in an abbreviated or a staccato form: on the contrary, whether we read the chapters

on the various diseases in which Osler was specially interested or whether we are delving into the chapters on his work as a clinician, or noting his respect and admiration for the nursing profession, as well as his knowledge of the Classics, we are thrilled by the erudition of the author. The references at the end of each chapter will be found invaluable by the research student. Osler embodied all the attributes necessary for the successful physician, for he was a great clinical teacher, a fine pathologist and a most engaging companion. To us in Ireland it is strange to find he was born on July 12th, and was in consequence named William after the Prince of Orange. Very few great doctors have held so many posts, and he graced each Professorship with honour and distinction in Montreal, Philadelphia, Johns Hopkins and in Oxford University. His writings on non-medical subjects are as widely known as those on his own speciality; his opinions on the Jewish question in relation to Germany might well be listened to by the anti-semites of to-day: "Should another Moses arise and preach a Semitic exodus from Germany, and should he prevail, they would leave the land impoverished far more than was ancient Egypt by the loss of the 'jewels of gold and jewels of silver'."

We are unable to make up our minds whether to recommend this work of Betts to the doctor or the layman; we feel it will interest both, but it will be of greater interest to the former. There are many interesting photographs and the presence of these must be the reason that the cost of this small book is 15s. In spite of all the great work Osler did and the honours which were conferred on him, he desired no other epitaph than "the statement that I taught medical students in the wards, and I regard this as by far the most useful and important work I have been called upon to do." At all times when we have finished reading a life of Osler we feel we have really been reading about a prophet who devoted his life to the welfare of mankind.

B. S.

TALKS ON BOOK-COLLECTING. Delivered under the authority of the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association at the National Book League. Edited by P. H. Muir. Cassell. 12s. 6d.

These seven lectures were prepared mainly for the edification of young booksellers, to help them in their trade of buying and selling books. Four of them are on specialized subjects—manuscripts before the invention of printing, binding and binders, early scientific books, and theatrical books—and are outside the interest of the normal book-buying public. Three are, so to speak, on ground level—the nature and scope of book-collecting, by Mr. Muir; the language of book-collecting, by Mr. Nowell-Smith, and fashions in book-collecting, by Mr. John Carter. Mr. Muir reviews the scope of book-collecting in the past 100 years; Mr. Nowell-Smith pleads for a uniform and generally accepted language of bibliography, and Mr. Carter discourses on the inexplicability of fashions, and advises the bookseller and book-collector to keep their heads cool when faced by a fashion such as that which paid £200 for *From the Four Winds*, and equally fantastic sums for the 1903 *Dynasts I* or the 1913 *Chance*.

The best advice that can be given to the bookseller is that he should lay himself out to cater for all tastes, remembering that the backbone of his trade

is the reader rather than the collector, and to the book-buyer that he should form his own taste, irrespective of fashions and text books and stratospherical discussion about issues and points. If you like Charles Garvice, then collect his books—you will find it difficult—and if you prefer Joyce, or Graham Greene, or Wodehouse, it is all the same to the Garvice man. Buy what you like to read, and keep what you think you would like to keep, and do not be stampeded by the bookseller who labels a book 'rare,' 'unique,' and so on.

P. S. O'H.

IBSEN AND THE BEGINNINGS OF ANGLO-IRISH DRAMA. I. John Millington Synge.  
By Jan Setterquist. Hodges, Figgis and Co., Ltd. 4s. 6d.

The Irish Institute at the University of Upsala must be congratulated on the zeal with which they have approached the project of publishing a series of works devoted to the study of Anglo-Irish literature. The first volume in the series was on *The Interpretation of the Cuchulain Legend in the Works of W. B. Yeats* in which Birjit Bjeersby made a scholarly contribution to our understanding of the poet's work through a careful sifting of his sources. The book under review is the second to come from Upsala. It does not leave the same impression of convincing conclusions arrived at by unquestionable reasoning as did its predecessor. This may be explained by the difference in the nature of the two theses. There is little doubt that in a general way the dramatic movement in Norway, through Ibsen and Björnson, was a stimulant to the movement in this country, but it becomes special pleading to stress unduly what Mr. Setterquist calls an "undeniable" affinity between Ibsen's dramas and those of Synge. Even if Synge had not himself referred to Ibsen's treatment of reality "in joyless and pallid words" and had not on another occasion indulged in an oblique sneer at the Norweigan for occupying himself with problems, and if this attitude could be explained as a kind of defence mechanism to hide his indebtedness to the northern dramatist, the parallels drawn by Mr. Setterquist between the two writers are not altogether convincing. In the end the similarities can be reduced to the *Zeitgeist*, to the same urge for individual liberation that came to Europe at the turn of the century. Mr. Setterquist will be on firmer ground in his next volume when he writes of Ibsen's influence on Edward Martyn.

A. J. L.

DEAREST ISA: ROBERT BROWNING'S LETTERS TO ISABELLA BLAGDEN. Edited,  
with introduction, by Edward C. McAleer. Nelson. 25s.

The Brownings settled in Florence in 1847, and Isabella Blagden appeared there in 1850. She speedily became prominent in the British-American colony there, and she became especially friendly with the Brownings. They wrote to each other when one party was out of Florence, and, after Elizabeth Browning died in 1861 and Robert Browning left Italy, he and Miss Blagden exchanged letters every month. They mutually agreed to destroy the letters when read, and he is presumed to have carried out this agreement, as none of her letters have survived. But she kept his, and when she died in 1873 they were returned



to him and he did not destroy them. After the death of his son they came under the hammer, and, eventually, twenty-seven of them were bought by T. J. Wise and the remaining 121 found their way to the Baylor University, Waco, Texas, who printed them in 1923, just the letters without explanatory notes of any sort.

The present book reprints these letters, plus those which Wise printed, and a few others that turned up in other collections, and presents the whole of the letters, in chronological order, with copious and welcome notes on the persons and incidents mentioned in each letter. The result is to give a most interesting picture of the colony, of the easy, comfortable and untroubled life, of the numerous visitors, the gossip, and everything. Landor, T. A. Trollope, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Robert Lytton, and other notabilities of the time, flit through it. And there is the very curious spectacle of English publishers being bullied by Browning and Trollope into not alone printing Miss Blagden's novels but into paying her three-figured amounts for them. Truly a golden age.

The letters cannot be said to add, or illuminate, anything material about Browning. They are gossip letters of the domestic interest order. His worries over his son, his education and his future, and his disappointment when he showed no particular ability and could not take a university degree, come out strongly after the death of his wife. There are some references to various of his works, and some to his contemporaries. And there is an odd reference to Mrs. Carlyle's death: "Poor Mrs. Carlyle's death was sad and strange—but by no means 'shook' me rudely; after all, there are people to take care of her husband, and she might be considered fairly as entitled to go."

Miss Blagden supported herself by various sorts of authorship. She seems to have been a sensible, helpful, warm-hearted body, who worked hard and made a brave show on a small income. One would like to know more about her, and it is a pity that her letters have not survived.

P. S. O'H.

WILLIAM DIAPER. *The Complete Works*. Edited by Dorothy Broughton Routledge and Kegan Paul. The Muses Library. 15s.

The Muses Library has already produced editions of Wyatt, Smart and Raleigh (to name no more), which no student of English poetry can afford to go without. He might be excused for thinking that William Diaper is another matter, to be safely left to antiquarians and dons. And, of course, there is no denying that Diaper is much smaller beer than the Wyatts and the Smarts. Nevertheless, it should be said at once that there is no question of book-making. Diaper deserved an edition. It was Geoffrey Grigson who first let in the light upon him; and Mrs. Broughton has very sensibly taken the hint. It would be a pity if the common reader let him slip back into the hands of the specialists.

Diaper was a country clergyman, born in 1685, who was noticed by Swift and enjoyed for a short period the splendid society of the Tory wits; but caught, like Swift himself, in the Tory debacle on the death of Queen Anne, he relapsed into obscurity and died in 1717. His poetical works, now collected for the first time, comprise *Brent*, a sort of anti-pastoral poem about his Somersetshire living; *Nereides or Sea-Eclogues*, fourteen pastoral dialogues which substitute a

marine for a rural setting; *Dryades, or The Nymph's Prophecy*, a poem which anticipates in form Pope's *Windsor Forest*; an *Imitation of Horace*; and two pieces of sustained translation, one from the French, the other of two books of Oppian.

The only total failure among these poems is, as the editor recognises, the *Imitation of the Seventeenth Epistle of the First Book of Horace*, which is addressed to Swift in Swift's favourite measure, the octosyllabic couplet. Diaper is trapped, as Swift is not, by the notorious and treacherous facility of this form; and makes the error, fatal for a satirist, of keeping no consistent point of view.

The *Sea-Eclogues* are another matter. Dedicated in thoroughly presentable verse to Congreve, they are interesting in two ways: first, in the light of the critical controversies of the period about the pastoral as a literary form; secondly, in view of the then burning question of the relationship between science and poetry. Mrs. Broughton gives most attention to the first of these questions, pointing out Diaper's debts to Theocritus and Virgil, Sannazaro, Du Bartas and others, and quoting from Tickell to show how the pastoral was a matter of critical debate; one misses here any reference to the question, raised by Pope and Purney, of the sort of diction proper to pastoral verse. As for Diaper's attitude to science, Mrs. Broughton notices his interest in the microscope, and very pertinently draws attention to the anti-speculative sentiments expressed by the poet, here and elsewhere, quite in the manner of Pope's "Presume not God to scan," and Swift's parable, in *The Tale of a Tub*, of the woman flayed; but the matter could well be pressed a little further, for the notes reveal in Diaper a quite Addisonian open-mindedness and lively curiosity, at odds with the attitude of Pope and Swift to all areas of enquiry outside those few in which they penetrated so deeply. Diaper not only knows but is impressed and intrigued by Fontenelle on the plurality of worlds, the speculations of Newton and others on the movement of the tides, and the epistemology of Malebranche. In this respect the *Sea-Eclogues* recall, not so much any other pastoral poems, as those more original and, of course, infinitely greater pieces, *A Song to David* and *Rejoice in the Lamb*. Diaper draws upon science, not as Thomson was to draw upon Newtonian optics and Lockean psychology, but as Smart was to draw upon Pliny as well as John Ray. He revels, as Smart does, in a vision of the copious Creation hymning the praises of a creative principle or spirit; but whereas in Smart the Creation sings to the glory of God, in Diaper it testifies rather to a sort of glossy Augustan Eros. The most impressive from this point of view is Eclogue XI, where, as the tides swell up the cove, so the merman seduces the mermaid; as they recede, so he leaves her stranded high and dry; and as the tide rises again, so he returns to her. One may regret that the editor found no room to draw attention to this structural function of Diaper's marine imagery at its best; by putting her poet from the first in the straitjacket of the pastoral, she has done him less than justice.

It is true that the Augustans laid more emphasis on *genre* than we do to-day; but that is no excuse for forgetting that classification by *genre*, like any other sort of classification, is only a matter of convenience. Thus there is something

comical about Mrs. Broughton's gentle admonition of an authority on eighteenth-century topographical poetry who omitted *Dryades* from his survey—"its place is in Chapter III, on Estate-poetry." The imagination boggles at the thought of some future scholar classifying topographical poetry of our own time—housing-estate poetry, railway-station poetry, funfair-poetry . . . the possibilities are endless. *Dryades* is not really a nature-poem; the natural descriptions are illustrative or emblematic of something else, and the poem comes to life only when the poet introduces his political motive, which is to press the Tory peace policy, as Swift had done in *The Conduct of the Allies*. As Mrs. Broughton shows, Diaper's arguments are very close to Swift's.

*Brent* may well have been, as the editor conjectures, the earliest of Diaper's poems. It is a thoroughly light-hearted piece, full of humorous exaggeration and written with great verve, deliberating selecting for treatment the least idyllic features of a rural life. There is no question, as with Crabbe, of a reaction against the rural scene or the poetic conventions of dealing with it; as Mrs. Broughton points out, it is an exercise in turning the pastoral conventions inside out. On the other hand, it is hardly what she says, "an almost lyrical outburst against humidity." It is not lyrical at all, but none the worse for that. One of the best passages does not appear in the first edition, and is printed in the notes. It concerns the nuisance of gnats, and the rustic's insensitivity to them, ending with the memorable lines:

"And tawny *Doll*, if e'er the Bed's too warm,  
Turns out her naked Bum, and dares the threatening swarm."

The translations are naturally of less interest. Diaper's contribution to the Englishing of Quillet's *Callipaedia*, a didactic poem in Latin on the rearing of children (first published in 1656), is Book IV, which deals with education. It is important chiefly as a document in the history of ideas; of particular interest is Diaper's plain reference to some verses of Rochester, usefully given by the editor in her note to lines 427-431. Diaper's version of the first two books of Oppian's *Halieuticks* takes him back to the marine and submarine worlds of *Nereides*. It is very quaint and sometimes something more, as in the digression in Book I on parental love in animals and birds; e.g., of nestlings:—

"While unfledg'd Chirpers flicker in the Nest"—

where "flicker" is a truly poetic word, at once surprising and just. Mrs. Broughton supplies, in an Appendix, *A List of Aquatic Animals mentioned in Diaper's Oppian's Halieuticks*; but even so her explanatory notes are sometimes meagre. As least one reader was baffled by 1, 203, 204, and found no note to help him; and the editor has missed a double echo in 1, 755—

"Where all the Mother-Waters silent flow";

cf. Cowley's *Davideis*—

"Where their vast courts the mother-waters keep,"

and Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe*—

"Where their vast courts the mother-strumpets keep."

Some misprints, whether preserved from the MSS. or overlooked in proof-reading, would be better away. For instance:—

“Tills to be shun’d, and Pleasures to be sought.” (Callipaedia, 58.)

“While buisy Men pursue unworthy Ends.” (ibid. 660.)

“Diseases oft prove fatal, when conceal’d,

But ripen’s Sores, if lanc’d, are soonest heal’d.”

(Dryades 437, 438—“ripen’s” for “ripen’d”)

“all are not cruel, but some harmless feed” (Nereides Eclogue XIV.)

“Nutures the Fry, and in her Likeness prides” (Haliuticks I, 1246.)

DONALD DAVIE.

CHEKHOV THE DRAMATIST. By David Magarshack. John Lehmann. 21/.

Ivan Bunin, in an essay on his friend Chekhov, writes of an incident in a restaurant where the latter was entertaining some guests:

“He was very cheerful and joked a lot. Suddenly, at an adjoining table, a man rose to his feet, holding a champagne-glass in his hand.

“‘Ladies and gentlemen, let us drink to the health of Anton Pavlovich who is here among us—the glory of our literature. the singer of twilight moods. . . .’

“He went pale and walked out of the restaurant. And later on he often told me the story with indignation.”

He refers also to Chekhov’s exasperation at the wrong note so commonly struck in describing his art: tenderness and melancholy, soulfulness and pessimism. Bunin believes, like Shestov, that he had “a pitless talent.”

Yet Mr. Magarshack has no easy task in persuading us to accept a new interpretation of the plays. The “spurious Chekhovian atmosphere which is laid on so thickly in every production of a Chekhov play” to emphasize its presumed subject of frustration is curiously seductive; though undoubtedly Mr. Magarshack is right in stressing that it is because he “paints his characters with so exquisite a brush that no caricature can strip them of their essential humanity.” *Chekhov the Dramatist* is an able, often provocative, and fully documented study of his development, of his problems, his views on the theatre and the playwright’s place in it. It traces in the plays the compactness and expressiveness, all the virtues on which Chekhov insisted, and analyses the reasons for his turning from the drama of direct to that of indirect action.

Stanislavsky’s conception of the plays—imposed on the Moscow Art Theatre when Chekhov was already too ill to interfere, and largely adopted by other producers and critics—would seem from Mr. Magarshack’s evidence to be a complete misinterpretation; but the examination undertaken of the ‘architecture’ of the last four plays to demonstrate its analogy to that of Greek tragedy is not altogether convincing. It is, however, to be hoped that a producer will attempt to present *The Seagull*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard* with the clarity, the firmness of shape and texture for which Mr. Magarshack



pleads. To abandon the shadows, the tenuous colours, the chilly-echoing disillusionment for a robust portrayal of life as it is, and should be—a portrayal here demonstrated to animate the later plays—would rescue Chekhov from the sentimentality he detested, and give to the theatre the subtle, gay and stringent experience that was his intention.

CHILDREN OF THE RAINBOW. By Bryan MacMahon. Macmillan. 15s.

Bryan MacMahon's short stories have already proved him to be a writer of no ordinary powers of imagination and language, and his first novel, if it is a novel, is no ordinary book. It is unlike anything that has come out of modern Ireland, or, indeed, anywhere else. Therein lies its great merit; it is true, unequivocally and unconcernedly true, to itself. It has all the courage of an imagination afire, looking out of the eye of a saint or out of a drunkard's eye—God's gift to the sneers of any levelling, rancorous mind. To tell its story, or, if you will, its linked episodes, is to tell nothing of it; as well try to define the quality of a collection of dramatic lyrics by a paraphrase of their subject matter. *Children of The Rainbow* is a poem, a song, a picture, an interpretation by ritual and symbol of the spirit and behaviour of an anachronistic community, a last free expression of a lost way of life. It demands from the reader quickness of imagination and sympathy, love of language for its own sake and a ready suspension of disbelief. The speech of the Clooneys, whether in love or anger or the mere exchange of wit, is no nearer to a transcription of daily speech than the language of *The Playboy*; subtleties of blood and sense and intellect that are normally unrecognised become articulate in their possessors; an outing of Wren Boys becomes a saga full of fire and colour and traditional splendour. Yet, go to meet it and all becomes credible from within, magnificently enjoyable, poetically, intuitively true. Somewhere a subtle, ironic humour moves unobtrusively with objective sanity; a harsh Gaelic brightness falls upon violent action and 'the bulks of actual things'; extravagance appears as the natural flowering of individuality rooted in tradition. This story of the village of Cloone is no nostalgic plea for the preservation of what is gone. It is a statement, a highly imaginative, highly selective, highly idealised statement. If there is implied in it an indictment of the effects of mechanisation and urbanisation, who will deny that colour and individuality and personal integrity and dignity are often the price of 'progress'? If damp and squalor and disease are forgotten in a riot of colour and song and gaiety, is it to say that colour and song and gaiety do not exist? This book is nothing but what it aimed to be. For what it is, within its intention, it is a triumph, rich, vigorous and tremendously alive in body and in spirit.

W. P. M.

THE MAN OUTSIDE. The Prose Works of Wolfgang Borchert. Introduction by Stephen Spender. Translated from the German by David Porter. Hutchinson International Authors. 12s. 6d.

PLEASURES OF NEW WRITING. An Anthology. Edited by John Lehmann. John Lehmann. 21s.

The first performance of Wolfgang Borchert's play, *The Man Outside*, was given the day after his death in November, 1947. The young actor and private

in the German army invading Russia had been twice imprisoned—once in solitary confinement and under sentence of death—for the frankness of his letters home. In this complete collection of his prose work, his compassion and bewilderment are as agonized in the finely articulate short stories and sketches as in the play; and all are memorable with their imagery and language of a poet. He writes of prisoners stumbling round a plot of grass where a solitary dandelion confounds one of them with its radiance, of the starved and dispossessed, of collapsed German cities. It is as if he discovered in the last years of his short life the whole of the groping, leaden pain of defeated common man. As Mr. Spender writes in his perceptive Introduction, it is useless to conjecture how Borchert would have developed had he lived. "He leaves us with a problem, which he did not solve, but he stated that problem, and it is still with us. . . . He achieved the task of constructing a framework with an empty space for God, even if he thought there was no God to be found in the world as he lived in it."

Mr. Lehmann's latest anthology from the pages of *New Writing* ranges as widely as did that much-regretted magazine. The poets represented include Mr. Auden, Dr. Edith Sitwell and Capetanakis; but the major part of the book is devoted to prose: short stories, studies and reminiscences from several countries. The essays on Paul Valéry by André Gide and on Wilfred Owen by Sir Osbert 'Sitwell, and the cooler sketches of Alun Lewis by Mr. Maclaren-Ross and George Orwell by Mr. John Morris, are of considerable interest in themselves, and because their subjects accentuate some of the outstanding qualities of the short stories. Pre-occupation with the problems of our time is, of course, common to many of them; but there is a great variety of form, a shift through fantasy and impressionism to bitter political commentary and a fascinated rendering of the weak shuffle of thought, the inertia and flat exchanges of the ordinary round. Where so much is excellent, it is possible only to mention some of the more remarkable contributions: Mr. Lionel Trilling's brilliant "Of this Time, Of that Place"; Supervielle's haunting "A Child of the High Seas"; the deeply-moving "The Old Man with the Top Boots" by Brancati; Mr. V. S. Pritchett's vivid and comical "It May Never Happen." Mr. Lehmann says that his anthology "is designed for the pleasure of readers." It would be an odd reader who disagreed.

ROTTING HILL. By Wyndham Lewis. Methuen. 14s.

This group of nine short stories may be read with great pleasure and without much reflection upon the crumbling civilisation so skilfully revealed. But the book is not likely to be so read. The politico-economic implications are too terrifyingly significant.

Ruskin pointed out that industrialism produced not wealth but *illth*: we have now the shabby and ignoble legacy he foresaw; and the *illth* is human and spiritual as much as it is mechanical and material. Equipped with such joyous wealth-gaining powers as were never before seen, a whimpering 'democracy' is tricked into demanding the right to drudgery, and it actually engages in a wholesale destruction of its own wealth in the name of security.

Man has definitely turned his back upon his destiny, and is bogged in a distressed area—sterling or dollar. Science, in E. M. Forster's words is 'the subservient pimp of industry'. To be more exact, of finance-controlled industry. Mr. Wyndham Lewis says: "Despotism is a human norm." But there are despotisms with which humanity can come to terms, whilst no civilisation can survive the domination of the money-millionaire.

Pseudo-morality does not ask if a policy will work; it insists, with conscious or unconscious hypocrisy that its policy is a *righteous* policy of social justice, fair dealing and security for all. Meanwhile it produces dust-bowls, drives ewe-lambs into the sea, plans wars for full-time employment, sells Hate twenty-four hours a day, and offers us *illth*.

Wealth becomes a scarcity commodity. Man-power is over-population. Leisure and recreation are 'idleness' or 'unemployment'. Art is immorality. Such wealth-gaining as survives is immediately translated into debt for enthroned Usury.

The confusion of thought resulting; the apathy of a people who have now lost even desire—in short, the death-rattle of an economy always 'rotting'—are powerfully dealt with by a man of creative genius possessing the invaluable insight that accompanies artistry in words. No wonder there has to be a 'paper shortage' if English 'governments' are to survive.

M. C.

**THE FORGING OF A FAMILY.** A Family Story studied in its Genetical, Cultural and Spiritual Aspects and a Testament of Personal Belief founded thereon. By the Right Honourable Auckland Campbell, Baron Geddes. Faber. 25/-.

In the Prologue to his book, Lord Geddes explains the circumstances—including a long illness and eventual blindness—that led him to attempt to refute the conclusions of scientific humanism about man and his fate. He believed that he could best clarify his ideas on the subject by tracing his own family history, and examining "how the individuals of successive generations through three generations had fared."

The life-stories of the members of seven generations of a Scottish Ing—men and women of widely different character and fortune—in their particular domestic setting and against the background of contemporary society, are presented with uncommon skill and liveliness; and Lord Geddes is able to write objectively of the outstanding achievements of himself, his brothers and sisters because his book is partly a study in genetics, and all the records are offered "as exemplars of the flow and purpose of the Universe of Being." His Aunt Margaret—a brilliant and fascinating woman—had suggested

"that in effect there was analogy between the phenomenon of the rise, maturity, decline and fall of civilizations (the Great Year) and cycles of potentization in the genic underworld of an Ing.

"Aunt Margaret thought of the cycle of genic potentization through several generations—including the individuals carrying the genes—enduring until something made a fresh averaging of the genic complement

desirable, as forming a Great One within the continuing sequence of the Ing—as each Great Year (civilization cycle) may be thought of as forming a section within evolving civilization. It certainly appears as if this idea had evidential support from the family story. . . .

“Just as civilization has come to this world in a series of what can fairly be described as waves of advance—some rising higher than others but, in their totality, tending to rise—so, in connection with human evolution, there are waves of change in the genic underworld, with evolutionary advance fostered by inbreeding groups.”

For him, this account of his family history is “an approach to understanding of man’s place in the totality of being”; and he turns therefore not only to the field of genetics but also to those of evolution, psychology, astronomy and religion. His interpretation stresses, for example, the working of evolution through group inbreeding by a combination of inter-group enmity and intra-group amity; and the transmission of knowledge and memory from generation to generation. The dangers of inbreeding are not minimized, but neither are its possible gifts. And what gives to this impressive book its very moving quality is the profound sense of continuity, the gathering riches of mind and spirit—as the reader becomes aware—that have enabled Lord Geddes to face his desperate physical injuries, the end of a very distinguished career, with firmness, and more, with serenity; and to write at the age of seventy, and for the benefit of others, his testament of spiritual belief.

“It thus appears that something of the Creator’s purpose is and must be worked out in the lives of men and women on this earth; that is the existence within the scope of created Being, of spiritual beings—who may fail to co-operate, or even rebel—is necessary to the Creator as He, by the evolution of His creation advances the expression of His Deity from the indifference of the pre-creational All toward its fullest manifestation in the evocation of Transcendent and Eternal Values.”

BOOKS AND WRITERS. By Robert Lynd. With a foreword by Richard Church. Dent. 16s.

In his published work Robert Lynd was essentially an essayist in the Lamb tradition. His range and his high level were astonishing. Week after week, for some 45 years, he poured out essays, wittily written, sometimes brilliant, at all times readable, and in the presence of his great contemporaries, Chesterton, Belloc and Lucas, he did not need to blench. His reputation as an essayist was established, and well deserved. But it is questionable whether a great critic was not lost in the essayist.

The present book, the last book which will bear his name, is a collection of essays in literature, the fourth of such collections in his long writing life. *Old and New Masters* (1919) and *The Art of Letters* (1920) seem to me to be two of the best books of literary criticism of this century, and if *Books and Authors* (1922), and the present book, are not quite as good, it is that the essays tend to be somewhat shorter, in some cases just glancing at the author. You feel that he is just getting into his subject when the essay ends. The normal length of the essay on



Candles, Nightingales, The Green Man, Derby Day, or any of the other subjects he used to write on, tended to impose itself on the literary essay, which needs greater length.

But for all that, these essays are delightful and worthwhile. As a critic, Lynd was sympathetic and just. He did not think that style did not matter, and he did not think that what is not easily comprehensible is of necessity great. He was not taken in by T. S. Eliot, or by *Finnegans Wake*, and he had reservations about Henry James. He held that a writer ought to get his writing down in words, and combinations of words, that are generally comprehensible. To those who agree with him, this book is worthwhile.

P. S. O'H.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRITISH ACADEMY, 1947. Oxford University Press: Geoffrey Cumberlege. 40s.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND LETTERS AND THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND LETTERS. Second Series. Number One. New York. 1951.

The *Proceedings of the British Academy, 1947*, is a volume of great distinction and wealth of scholarship. Sir H. I. Bell's Presidential Address is largely devoted to a consideration of the principal functions to be attributed to an Academy. It should be "a centre and a rallying-point for the scholars of the country which it represents, stimulating research and honouring meritorious work by election to its ranks; uphold unwaveringly the standard of scholarship, content with no ideal lower than the best that is obtainable; oppose always and everywhere any attempt to subject scholarship to political, social or nationalistic ends; and form links with scholars of other lands, thereby contributing towards a better understanding between nations." Mr. T. S. Eliot's lecture on Milton modifies, to some extent, his earlier judgment: "It now seems to me that poets are sufficiently removed from Milton, and sufficiently liberated from his reputation, to approach the study of his work without danger, and with profit to their poetry and to the English language." This is a beautifully balanced and persuasive study of Milton, who, as a poet, is "probably the greatest of all eccentrics." Professor W. L. Renwick's paper on "The Faerie Queene" is also a memorable piece of work.

"If we will take *The Faerie Queene* for what it is; not a fossil or a meteorite, but the book of one man's journey through the darkness, we shall see Edmund Spenser as a positive and responsible gentleman who ranged freely and boldly through a universe of hardship and bewilderment and delight, and left us some bearings, not unintelligible if we will apply a little intelligence to his conventional signs, to direct us in some ways in which we may travel in company with our fellows, if not in complete security, at least with some dignity and decency.

"And for to pass the time his book shall be pleasant to read in." The third lecture on literature, "Shakespeare and the Termers," by Mr. G. M. Young, is a learned and fascinating exploration of Shakespeare's knowledge of the law. The contents also include Mr. W. F. R. Hardie's "Naturalistic Ethics";

Professor David Douglas's "The Rise of Normandy"; valuable illustrated lectures on "Baroque Art"; "The Italian Element in Late Roman and Early Medieval Architecture," and "Attic Vases in the Cyprus Museum"; and "The Archaism of Irish Tradition," by Dr. Myles Dillon, which presents a remarkable collection of evidence showing how, in social organization, in language and tradition, India and Ireland have preserved common Indo-European traditions.

*The Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Institute of Arts and Letters*, for 1950, included a joint ceremonial in May, with citations of newly elected members and recipients of various awards. In his address as President of the Institute, Mr. Douglas Moore pointed out: "Unlike the French Academy, after which our societies were patterned, we have no official government standing, although we hold our charters by act of the Congress. There is nothing we are asked or required to do about the function of art in America. We exist purely as an influential body of opinion." Mr. Robert Frost's Blasfield Address, in the form of a long poem, is printed here; and also the several Dinner Meeting Addresses, all pleasantly urbane in their praise of distinguished guests. Mr. Somerset Maugham's speech on the function of the novelist seems oddly reticent beside the overflowing adoration of Whitman expressed by Dr. Edith Sitwell in her talk on "Whitman and Blake." The address by Mr. Francis Hackett, "William Faulkner and the Nobel Award," is an excellent piece of criticism.

THE BRITISH JOURNAL FOR THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE. Vol. II. No. 6. Nelson. 7s. 6d.

Professor H. Dingle's brilliant survey, 'The Scientific Outlook in 1851 and 1951,' opens this number of *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*. Mr. D. M. MacKay's article, 'Mindlike Behaviour in Artefacts,' is, in part, an answer to Professor Popper's interesting strictures, in a previous number, on the capabilities of machines. Mr. H. A. C. Dobbs has contributed a paper that "seeks to elucidate the phenomenon known in psychology as 'the specious present,' by postulating a two-dimensional theory of the extensional aspects of time. On this theory, the usual logical and psychological difficulties, encountered in current accounts of this phenomenon, can be resolved." The last of Professor P. W. Bridgman's lectures delivered in the University of London on 'The Nature of Some of Our Physical Concepts' is also printed; and, in addition to a discussion of the hypothesis of Cybernetics by Mr. F. M. R. Walshe, there are authoritative reviews of recent books on philosophy and science.

HISTORY OF MEDIAEVAL PHILOSOPHY. Volume One. From the Beginnings to the End of the Twelfth Century. By Maurice de Wulf. Translated by Ernest C. Messenger. Nelson. 21/-.

This new edition of the *History of Mediaeval Philosophy* introduces various modifications, notably an inversion of the order of treatment adopted in the previous editions, the analytic preceding the synthetic method in the examination of the philosophic systems of the Middle Ages. It was De Wulf's conviction that, when our knowledge of the period's productions is, so far as is

possible, complete, it will "then be seen that, despite the infinite variety of mediaeval philosophies, a common doctrinal patrimony was slowly built up in the course of centuries, which thus witnessed the progressive realisation of an intellectual unity, an ideal which exercised its influence upon all men's minds." To meet criticism of his interpretation of Scholasticism as insufficiently stressing individual systems, De Wulf's synthesis is here a strictly historical arrangement of his analytic researches. The pattern, as he brilliantly demonstrates, remains the same.

"The analogies between the philosophical systems of the Middle Ages, and the fundamental community of possession of philosophical conceptions, realised at that time more than at any other period of history, are facts just as much as the originality of each thinker, and the doctrinal divergences of particular systems. This intellectual unity, which we previously regarded as an end to be attained, or an ideal to be aimed at, thus appears now as a result, or an effect. It is due above all, as we shall show, to the identity of influences affecting the thinkers of the Middle Ages, in varying proportions."

The scheme of the work as a whole shows the fifth to the end of the twelfth century as the period of formation; the thirteenth century as that of full development; and the fourteenth and first half of the fifteenth century as the period of decline to be followed by the beginnings of modern philosophy. The final volume of the present edition appeared in French in 1947 shortly before the author's death. Dr. Messenger, who has finely translated the first volume of this great work, contributes a biographical note as a tribute to De Wulf's memory.

THE ASCENT OF MOUNT SION. By Bernardino de Laredo. Translated with Introduction and Notes by E. Allison Peers. Faber. 21/-.

Professor Peers's study, *Spanish Mysticism*, included extracts from the *Ascent of Mount Sion* which had come "like a flood of light" upon the mystical experiences and difficulties of St. Teresa. The present book is a translation of the third part of the *Ascent*, which alone is concerned with the higher stages of the contemplative life, a summary of the first two parts, and a critical examination of the work.

Laredo, a sixteenth-century Sevillian, is an attractive figure. Devout from childhood, he was persuaded to take up the profession of medicine; but, though he became a distinguished physician and wrote books on medicine, he entered the Order of St. Francis, at the age of twenty-eight, as a lay brother and was noted for the holiness of his life and his unceasing care of the sick. Professor Peers concludes his admirable introduction:

"If it (the *Ascent*) is not in the first rank of the classics of Spanish mysticism, its vivid and detailed treatment of the subject of quiet puts it high in the second. And, since its influence on St. Teresa brings it into the main stream of Spanish mystical history, it is unlikely, now that it has been rediscovered, ever to be forgotten again."



Here is a distinguished and persuasive presentation of a work that, without the excesses that for us disfigure much mystical writing, has delicacy, compassion and an authentic nobility of spirit.

FEARFUL PLEASURES. By A. E. Coppard. Peter Nevill. 11/6.

Mr. Coppard says in a foreword to his present collection of short stories, most of which have been out of print for many years: "I am a bigoted and dogmatic materialist. . . . And here and now I confess that I am not at all immune to the shock of the macabre or the ghoulishly suggestible, although that doesn't ruffle a feather of my scepticism." This attitude subtly flavours stories that demonstrate his mastery of the *genre*: the ghostly, the fantastical, the grim, and the tales that haunt by their comedy or their pathos. "The Homeless One", set in a madhouse, is an outstanding and very moving piece of work; and the whole volume enchants and unnerves with beautiful dexterity.

LEAVES FOR THE BURNING. By Mervyn Wall. Methuen. 10/6.

*Leaves for the Burning* has for theme the meeting of some middle-aged, cautious, and not very successful men who attempt, in a riotous week together, to drown the memory of their ardent under-graduate ambitions. Comedy and tragedy, malice and futility, accompany their unsteady progress from a small midland town, not, as intended, to Yeats's burial, but first to Dublin and then to Connemara. Mr. Wall's delightful and wittily-drawn backgrounds and his satirical account of sharp-nosed cant and of officials nicely adjusted to self-interest, of the bar-rooms that chart the perseverance and humours of the revelers, make a vivid, amusing and mordant novel.

HOW THE WORLD WAS EXPLORED. By Marie Neurath and J. A. Lauwerys. Max Parrish. 6/-.

*How the World was Explored* is one of an admirable series for children between the ages of eight and eleven. It is a brief history of exploration that includes the journeys of nomads and primitive peoples, and of Marco Polo, Columbus, Drake, Livingstone and Nansen. The text is excellent, and the illustrations delightful.

*Reprints.*—THE BOSTONIANS (12/6) and THE EUROPEANS (10/6) by Henry James have now been added to the Chiltern Library (Lehmann). The former has an introductory essay by Mr. Lionel Trilling that discusses its implications as a political novel, its suffusion with "the dry American light"; the latter has one by Mr. Sackville-West who points out that, though James excluded it from the canon of his writings, "its wry charm proceeds from a certain innocence of vision which soon afterwards gave permanent place to deeper and more tragic perceptions."



ÉTUDES ANGLAISES. Grande-Bretagne—États-Unis. Ve. Année. No. 1. Février, 1952. Didier, Paris. 400 fr.

The introduction to this issue of *Études Anglaises* states: "Il offrira, sur la littérature ancienne et moderne de langue anglaise, et sur la langue anglaise elle-même, ce mélange d'articles de fond, de notes érudites ou critiques, de comptes rendus de livres ou de revues, qui a paru plaire à nos abonnés d'autrefois. . . . La France se doit, et elle doit à ses voisins sur le chemin d'une civilisation qui se croit encore capable et qui est passionnément avide de progrès, d'avoir, elle aussi, sa revue consacrée à l'étude approfondie, à la libre intelligence, de ces écritures où s'expriment plus clairement, plus pleinement qu'en aucun autre art, les tourments et les rêves des millions d'hommes qui parlent aujourd'hui la langue de Shakespeare." The contents include articles on Skelton, Samuel Butler and William Faulkner; critical essays on mediaeval English poetry, on Yeats and Katherine Mansfield; and many reviews. The distinction of its contributors, its critical standards and wide range make *Études Anglaises* a journal of considerable interest.

BOOKS ABROAD. An International Literary Quarterly. Autumn 1951. 75 cents. Winter 1952. 1 dollar and 25 cents. University of Oklahoma Press.

The Autumn 1951 number of *Books Abroad* includes a survey of modern Turkish literature, a biographical sketch of the dramatist Caesar von Arx, and a study of Max Picard. The Winter 1952 number, in addition to articles on Juan Ramón Jiménez, Pär Lagerkvist, Valéry Larbaud, and the French Canadian novelist, Ringuelet, publishes tributes written for the occasion of the quarterly's Silver Jubilee Celebration. Representative of the deserved praise offered to *Books Abroad* is André Maurois's description of it as "the only international critical publication which is at the same time complete, objective, and careful of literary standards."

THE CONCEPT OF MAN AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION IN EAST AND WEST.  
The Indian Institute of Culture. 1/-.

This paper was prepared by the Indian Institute of Culture for the East-West Round Table Discussion, at New Delhi in December, 1951, sponsored jointly by Unesco and the Indian Government. It is a lucid and balanced document, stressing the fact that the best hope of a united world lies in the recognition that the highest traditions of East and West are not fundamentally different, and that "a civilization in which spiritual aspirations are fostered as well as material needs met, should be the ideal for all parts of the world."

SOME PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS OF EARLY CHINESE MEDICINE. By Ilza Veith, M.A., Ph.D. Transaction No. 4. Pp. 15. Cr. 8 vo. The Institute of Culture. 1952.

This is an interesting and amusing monograph, dealing with Chinese medical history which is veiled in legend. Huang Ti, The Yellow Emperor, who is said

to have lived for 100 years, produced his *Classic of Intern Medicine*, which shows the high place accorded to medicine in those days when the art of healing was part of philosophy and part of religion.

Scientific medicine as such did not exist and man was said to owe his life to the harmony of natural forces. Health, too, was said to be dependent on the intelligence and enlightenment of the Emperor: if he is not intelligent the organs of the body become "dangerous and perilous." Books are written on the taking of the pulse, which was the main diagnostic method of the Chinese physician but stress is laid on the necessity for attention to the digestive function. A fascinating little study.

B. S.

**ROCKETS AND JETS.** By Marie Neurath. Parrish Colour Books for Children. Max Parrish. 6s.

This little book is designed for the child with an interest in mechanics. It gives a clear account of modern planes and rockets, and of space ships of the future and what they may accomplish. Experts have been consulted to ensure the accuracy of the illustrations.

**IMAGI.** An International Number. Fourteen—Vol. 5 No. 3—1951. One Dollar.

This issue of *Imagi* contains poems by Juan Ramón Jiménez and Saturno Montanari with translations on opposite pages, translations of poems by Jules Laforgue and Marceline Desbordes-Valmore, and one into German of Ezra Pound's *E. P. Ode pour L'Election de son Sepulcre*. There are contributions from India, Japan and Korea, and by, among others, Mr. John Hewitt and Mr. Roy McFadden. Though a small periodical, the contents of *Imagi* are of outstanding interest.

**ADVICE TO MY GODCHILDREN.** By Villiers David. Duckworth. 3/6.

In his little book, Mr. Villiers David quotes two passages from Chesterfield for his godchildren to enjoy "as a cocktail to his book"—which indicates his own intention to offer advice with provocative brevity. His aphorisms would encourage a young person to be wilful in small things, and civilized in great; spirited, reverent before "a glass of wine, a Mozart opera, a beautiful face, a brilliant talker, a friend"; iconoclastic, but with a nice appreciation of Aristotle's *Ethics* and Chesterfield's *Letters*, and of fame, which "like good furniture or a large fortune, is one of the minor blessings of life"; curious always, and anticipating the subtler, profounder pleasures of middle and old age. "To stare back wistfully at the tiny flower-bed of your youth, while in every direction the earth and sky teem with untried novelties is to confess yourself contemptibly unimaginative."

Mr. Villiers David has been so careful for his godchildren that one hopes he will not have to dip his pen into an acid 1751 inkwell and paraphrase: "As fathers commonly go, it is seldom a misfortune to be fatherless; and considering the general run of sons, as seldom a misfortune to be childless."